



JAMES PATTERSON
**MAXIMUM
RIDE**

NARAE LEE

1942-1943

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MAXIMUM
RIDE



WHAT CAME BEFORE

Max and her flock are genetic experiments. Created by a mysterious lab known only as the "School," their genetic codes have been spliced with avian DNA, giving them wings and the power to soar. What they lack are homes, families, and memories of a real life.

After breaking out of the School and being hunted by Erasers and Jeb Batchelder — a man they once thought of as a father — the flock ultimately uncovered not only the corporation behind their creation, ITEX, but the organization's plan to reduce the world's population by half! Imprisoned by ITEX, scheduled for termination, and seemingly betrayed by their youngest member, the flock's position seemed hopeless. But then Angel orchestrated a breakout with the assistance of Ari, and the kids won a second chance to save the world!

Unfortunately, the good news ended there, as a rift formed within the flock. With Fang adamantly opposed to adding Ari to their group, the family divided: Iggy and Gazzy followed Fang to the West Coast, while the rest of the flock and Ari went with Max to Europe!

Arriving in Germany, Max and her team infiltrated an isolated ITEX facility. After hearing that the "By-Half" initiative was already well underway, the kids managed to send a distress signal to Fang via his blog, only to be captured shortly thereafter. Shackled and helpless, Max, Nudge, and Angel were marched into the office of the facility's director, Marian Janssen, who claimed to be Max's mother! But the director's claims couldn't have been further from the truth, as Max discovered when Jeb dropped the biggest bombshell. Not only did she learn that he's her biological father, but also that her mother is none other than the doctor she met in Arizona — Valencia Martinez! But Max scarcely had time to digest this information before she was whisked off to go toe-to-toe with ITEX's latest mutation — Omega!! Their contest was interrupted, though, when Ari was struck down defending Max. Enraged, Max made short work of Omega, leaving only her fake "mother" standing in her way...

CHARACTER INTRODUCTION



MAXIMUM RIDE

Max is the eldest member of the flock, and the responsibility of caring for her comrades has fallen to her. Tough and uncompromising, she's willing to put everything on the line to protect her "family."



FANG

Only slightly younger than Max, Fang is one of the elder members of the flock. Cool and reliable, Fang is Max's rock. He may be the strongest of them all, but most of the time it is hard to figure out what is on his mind.



IGGY

Being blind doesn't mean that Iggy is helpless. He has not only an incredible sense of hearing, but also a particular knack (and fondness) for explosives.



NUDGE

Motormouth Nudge would probably spend most days at the mall if not for her pesky mutant-bird-girl-being-hunted-by-wolf-men problem.



GASMAN

The name pretty much says it all. The Gasman (or Gazzy) has the art of flatulence down to a science. He's also Angel's biological big brother.



ANGEL

The youngest member of the flock and Gazzy's little sister, Angel seems to have some peculiar abilities — mind reading, for example.



ARI

Just seven years old, Ari is Jeb's son but was transformed into an Eraser. He used to have an axe to grind with Max but seems to have switched sides recently.



JEB BATCHELDER

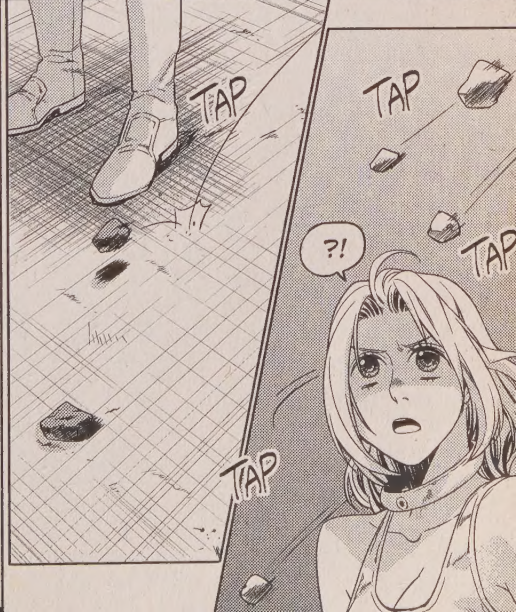
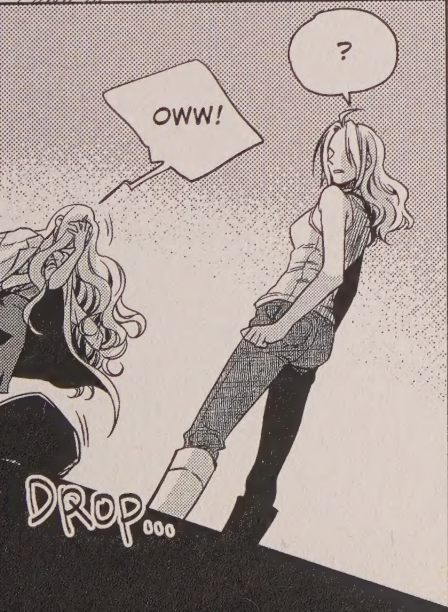
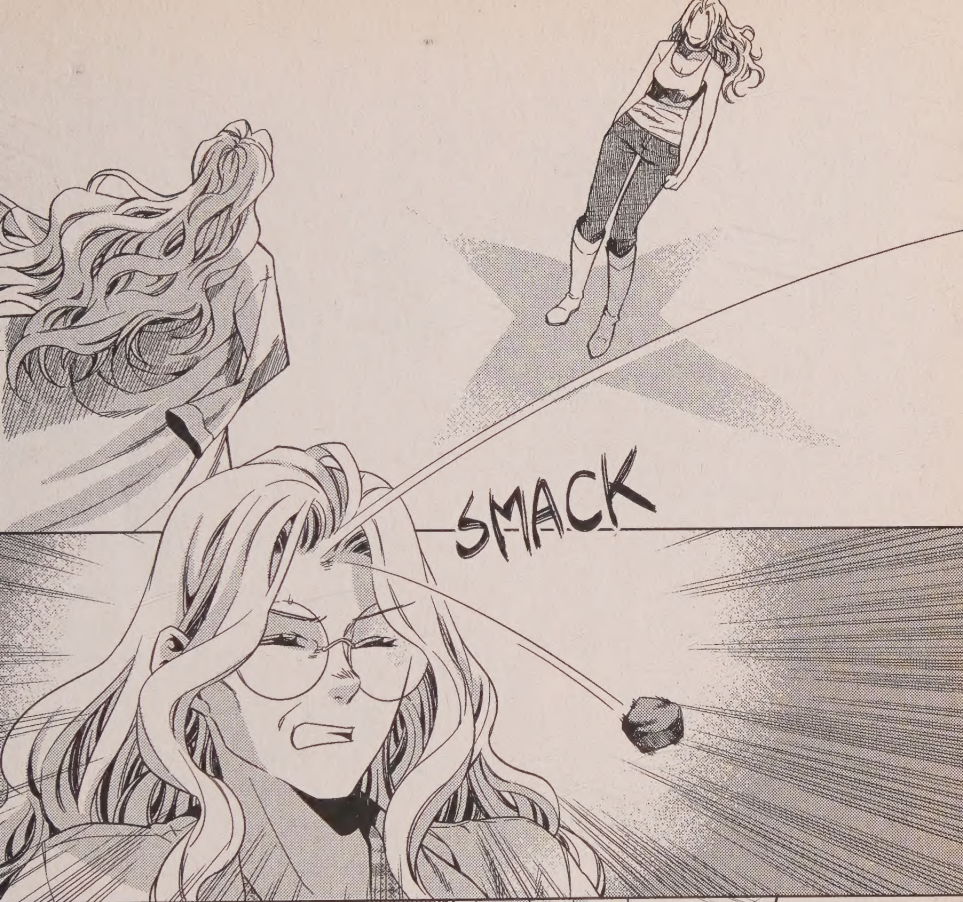
The flock's former benefactor, Jeb was a scientist at the School before helping the flock to make their original escape.



MAXIMUM RIDE

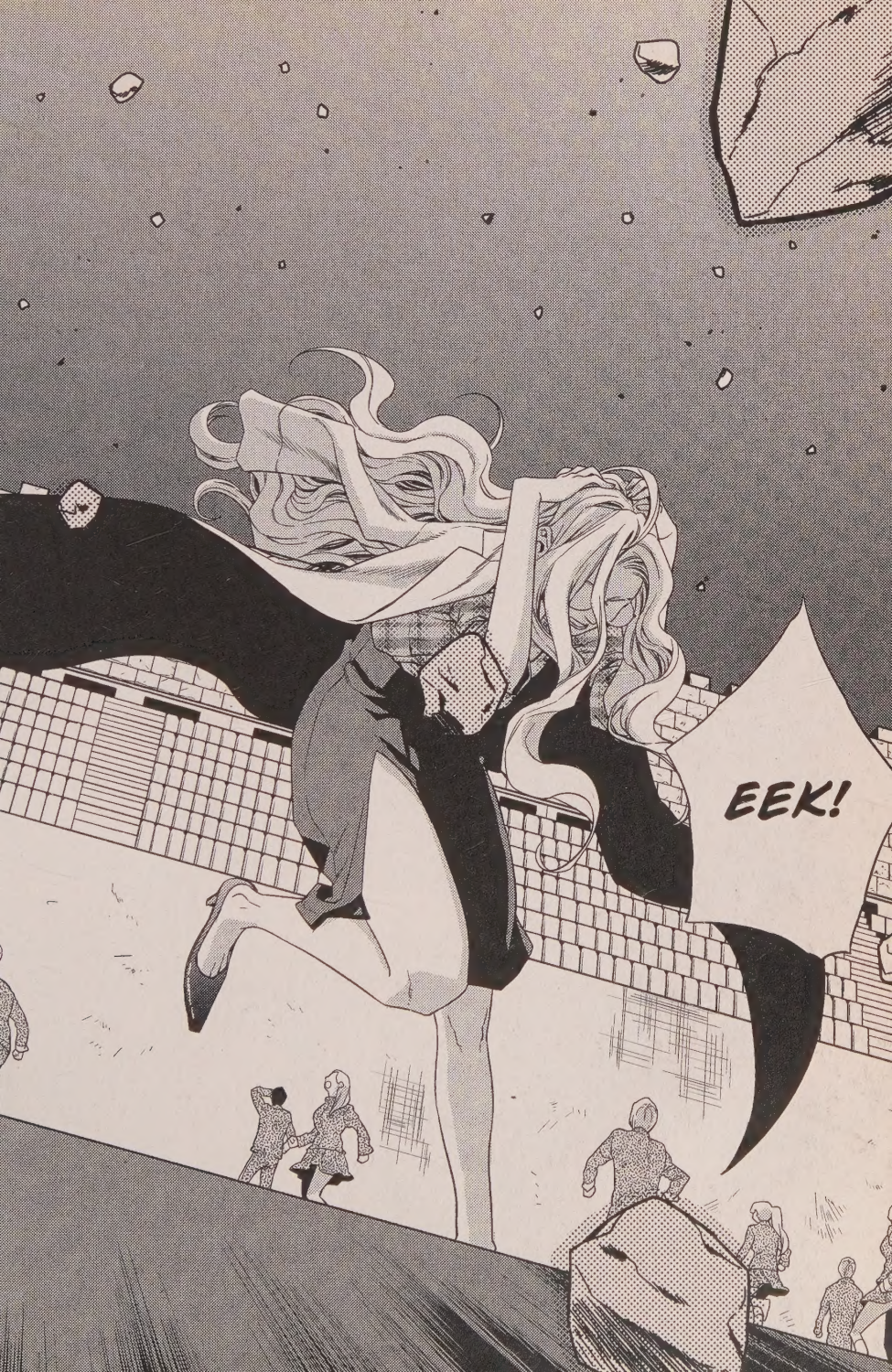


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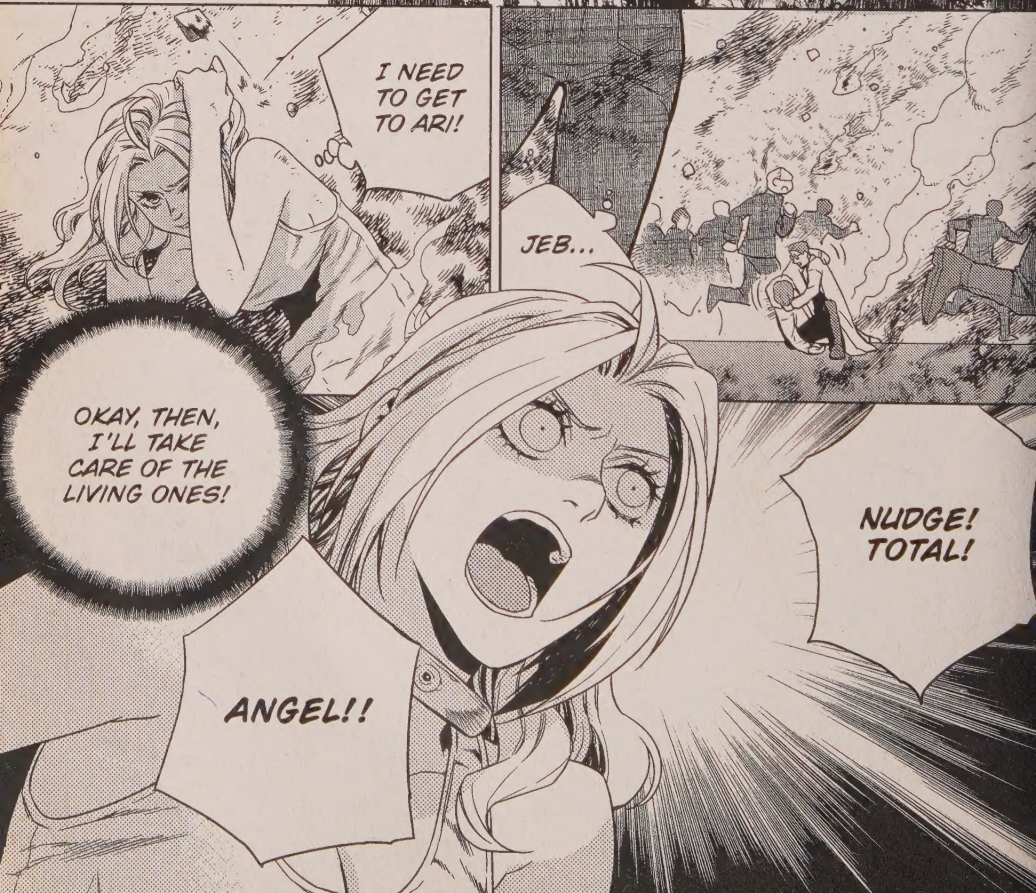
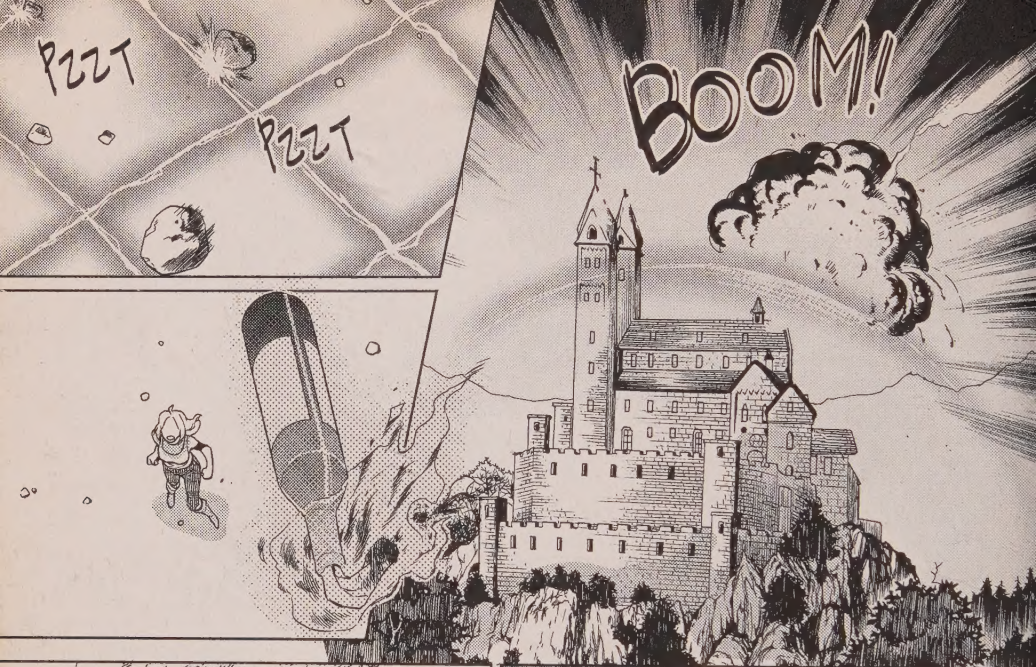


?!

MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 40



EEK!



PZZT

PZZT

BOOM!

I NEED
TO GET
TO ARI!

JEB...

OKAY, THEN,
I'LL TAKE
CARE OF THE
LIVING ONES!

ANGEL!!

NUDGE!
TOTAL!

MAX!!

STAND
NEXT
TO THE
WALL!

WHO'S
THROWING
THE ROCKS?

KIDS.
IT FEELS
LIKE
KIDS.

SAVE
THE
FLOCK!

DESTROY
ITEX!

YAAAAAY

WONDER
IF THEY'RE
BLOG
READERS?

CHASE
THEM
AWAY!!

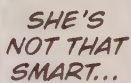
AIEE!

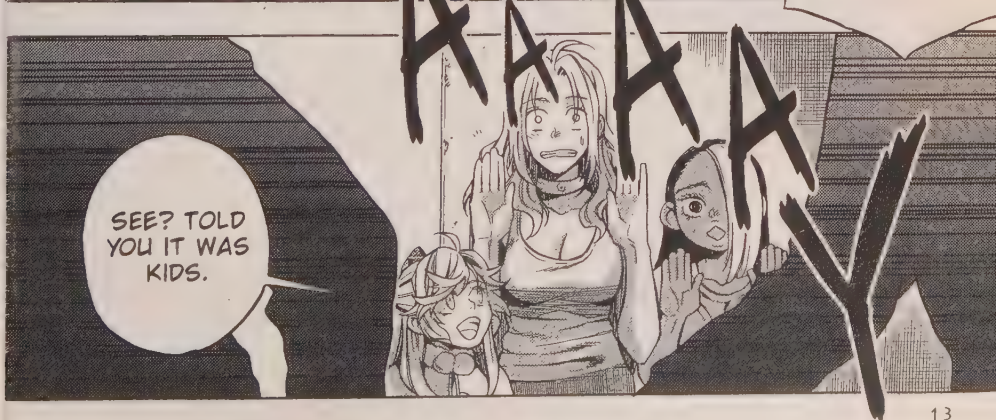
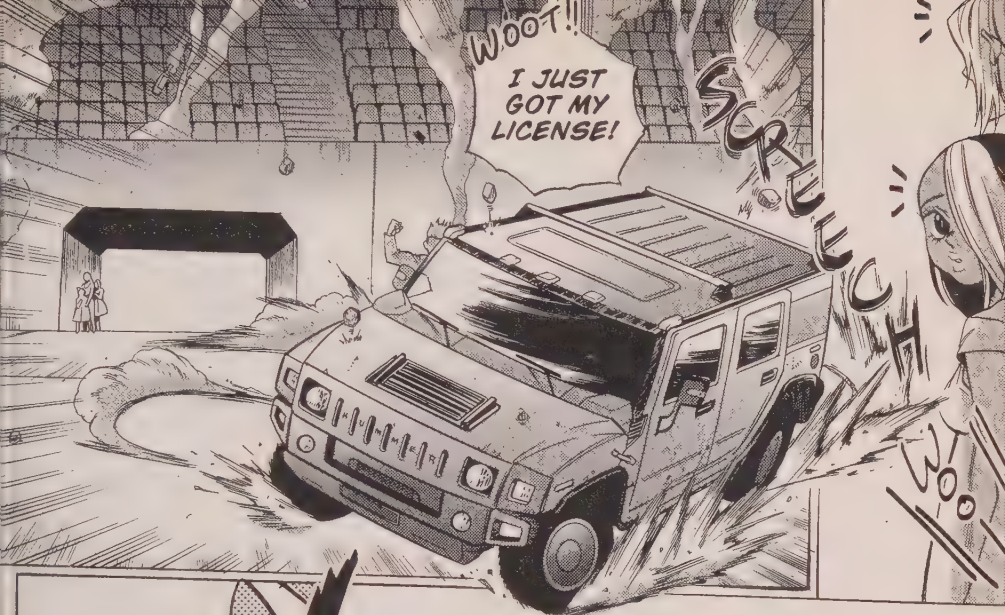
THEY
ARE
VERMIN!
CHASE
THEM
AWAY!



BUT—



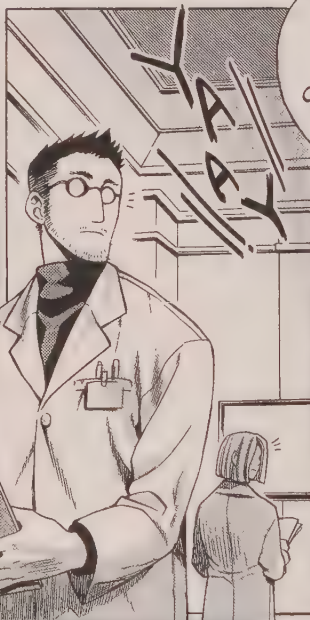




WESTFIELD,
ENGLAND

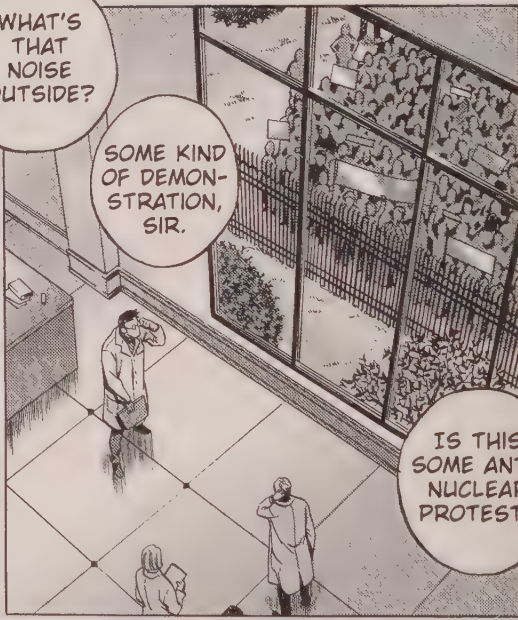


SECTOR, 129
JHON.JK



WHAT'S
THAT
NOISE
OUTSIDE?

SOME KIND
OF DEMON-
STRATION,
SIR.

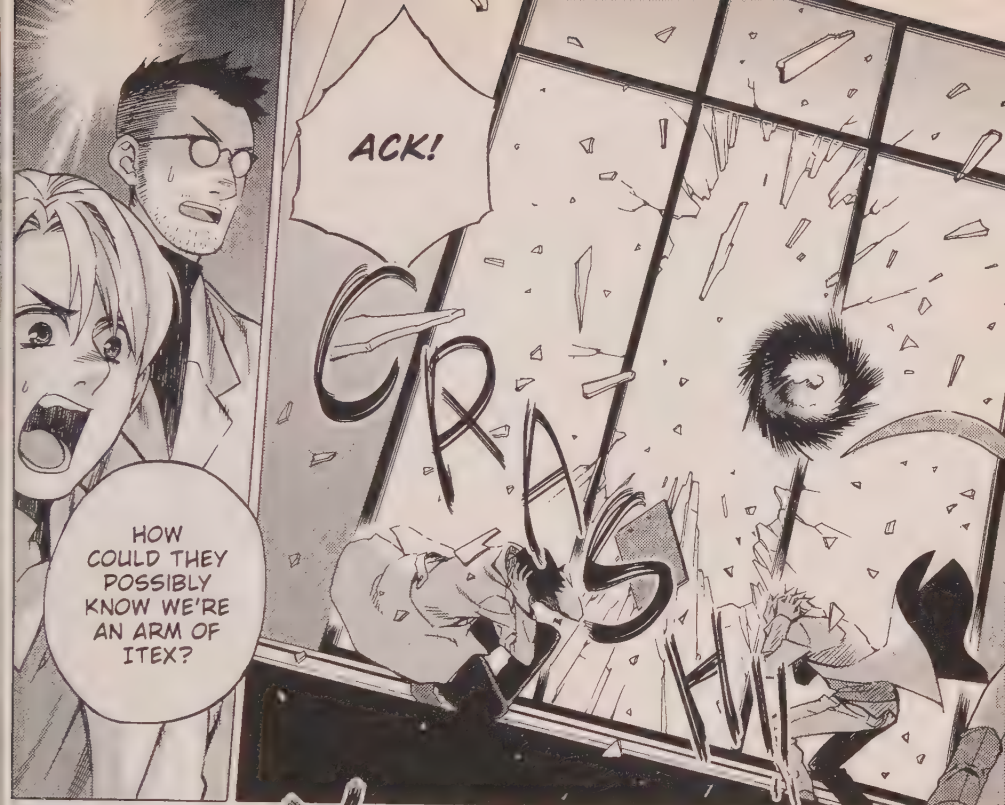


IS THIS
SOME ANTI-
NUCLEAR
PROTEST?



SAVE THE
FLOCK!
DESTROY
ITEX!

SAVE THE
WORLD!
DESTROY
ITEX!



ACK!

HOW
COULD THEY
POSSIBLY
KNOW WE'RE
AN ARM OF
ITEX?

GRASS



WE WANT
WHAT'S
OURS!

YOU
BELONG
BEHIND
BARS!

ITEX IS
AN EVIL
GIANT!

US KIDS
AIN'T
BUYIN'
IT!

C-

CALL
SECURITY!

.....

MARTINSLIJN,
NETHERLANDS

WHA—?!

DASH

YOU'VE
RUINED OUR
WATER AND
OUR AIR!

WOO—!

YOU'RE
EVIL AND
YOU JUST
DON'T
CARE!

FANG IS
RIGHT:
THE TIME
HAS
COME!

WHAT
ARE THEY
SAYING?!

YAAAY

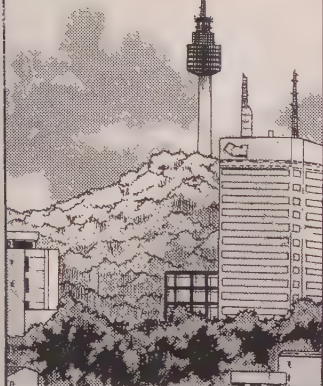
FANG?

FUM E!

FOR US
KIDS TO
CLAIM
OUR
HOME!

WHO'S
FANG?

BUCHEON,
SOUTH KOREA



LIVE FROM THE SCENE!
Kids rise up against ITEX!
(Japan)
paly: 2.4682

The protest continues!
(Australia)
paly: 2.4682

2013.01.10 korea 🇰🇷
Behind the giant corporation!
▲(Click here to see the evidence)



YUN: Itex is an evil giant!



j.j: Us kids ain't buyin' it!



IT'S
WORKING!

ARE
THEY ALL
READERS
OF YOUR
BLOG?

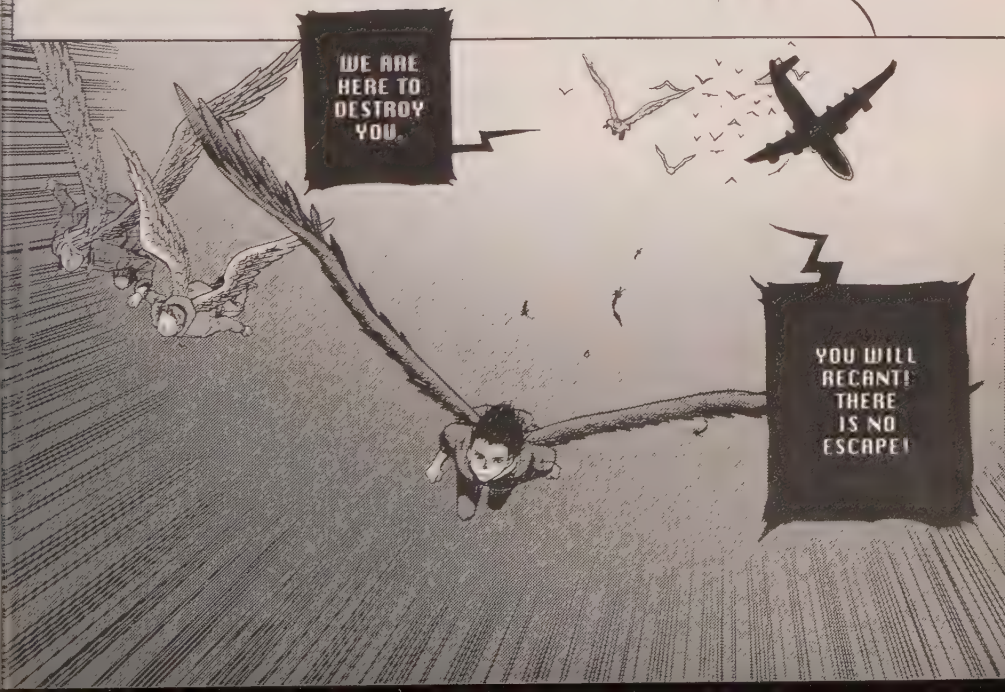
PROB-
ABLY.

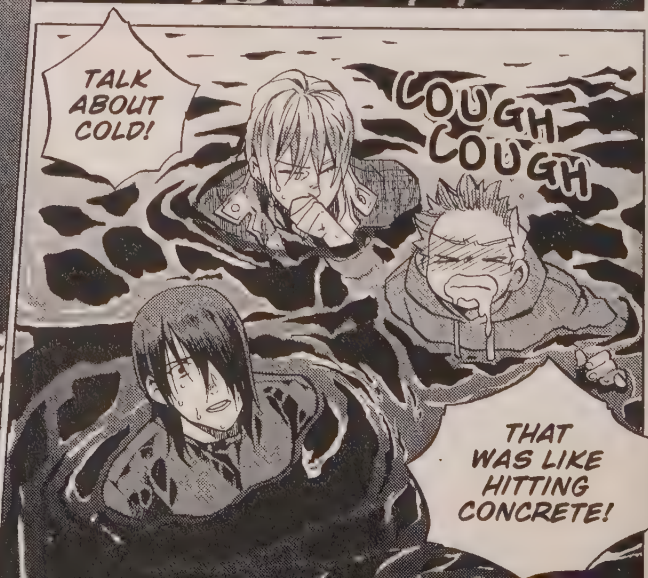
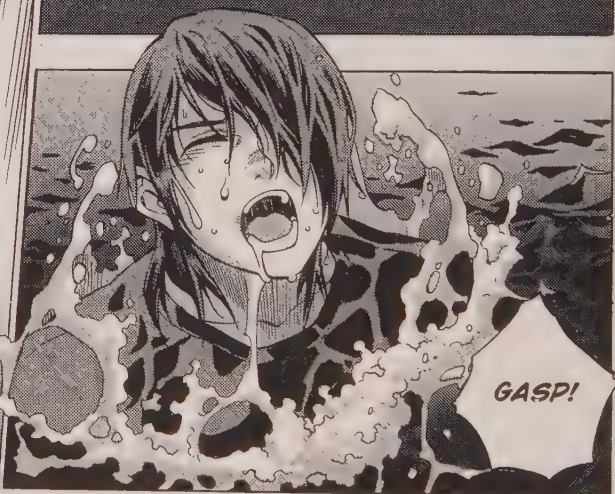
NOW IF WE
CAN ONLY
MAKE IT TO
GERMANY IN
TIME—

WHAM...
WHAM...
WHAM...

BO

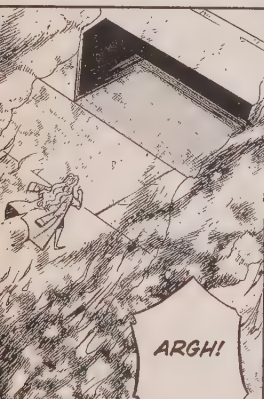
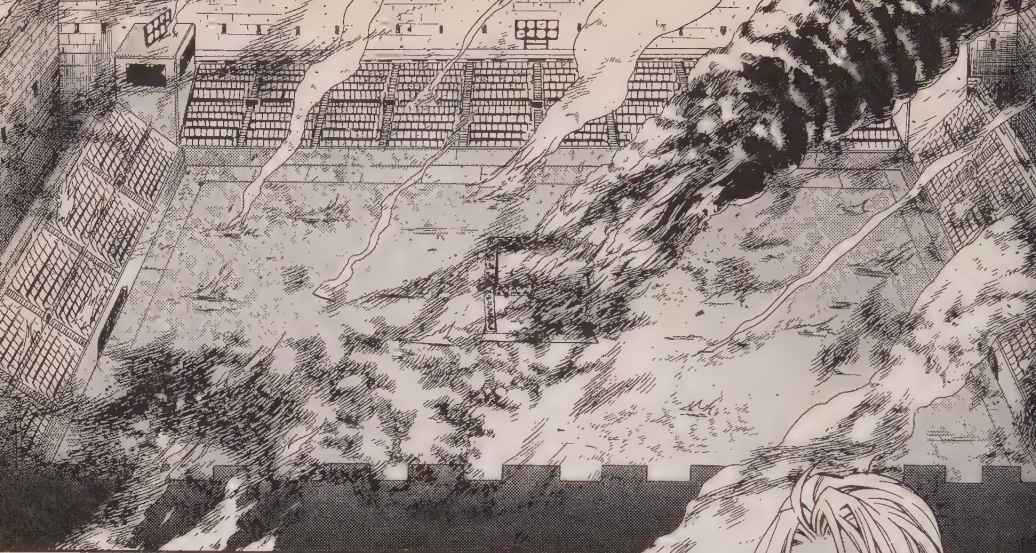




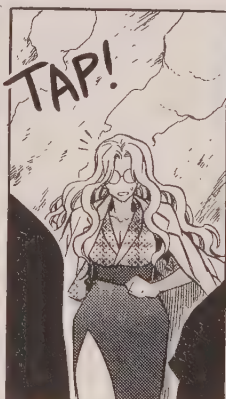


SPLASH!!

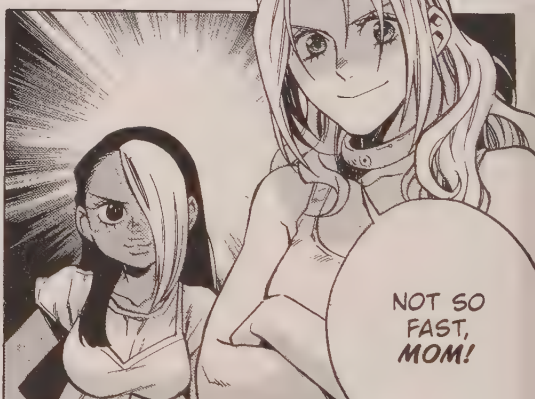
WELL,
LET'S GET
TO SHORE
FIRST.



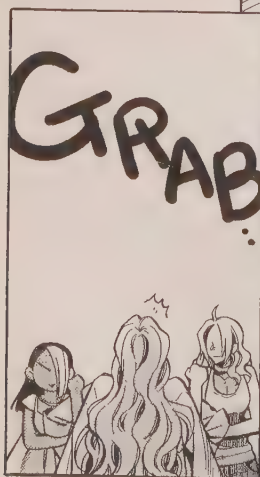
ARGH!



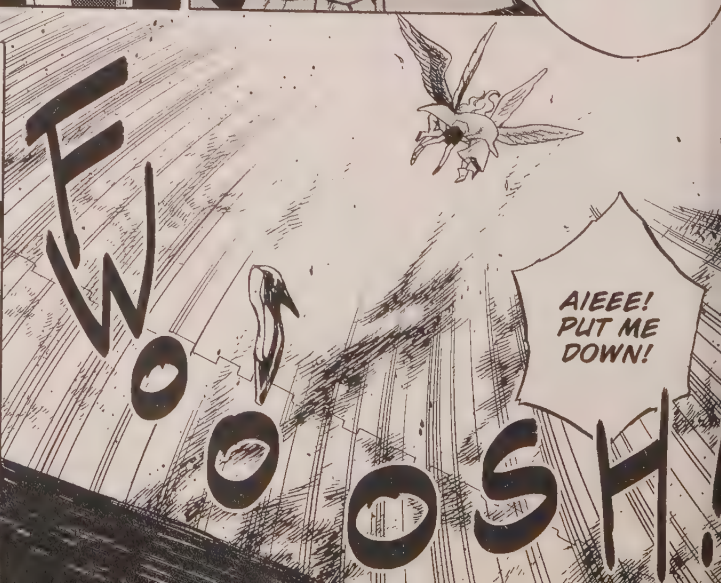
TAP!



NOT SO
FAST,
MOM!



GRAB



FW

AIEEE!
PUT ME
DOWN!

OH, DID
YOU SEE?
I DEFEATED
SUPERBOY.

OMEGA
WAS FAR
SUPERIOR
TO YOU!

AND YET
HERE I AM,
DRAGGING
YOUR STUPID
BUTT ACROSS
THE SKY.

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?
WHERE
ARE YOU
TAKING
ME?

MOSTLY
JUST UP.

I DO
WANT SOME
ANSWERS,
THOUGH.

STRUGGLE
STRUGGLE

I'LL
TELL YOU
NOTHING!

IN THAT
CASE, I'M
GOING TO DROP
YOU FROM WAY,
WAY UP HERE,
AND WATCH
YOU GO TWO
DIMENSIONAL.

SHUDDER

WHAT DO
YOU WANT
TO KNOW?

WHO'S
MY REAL
MOM?

AND NO,
DESIGNING
ME DOESN'T
MAKE YOU A
MOM.

HMPH!
I.
DON'T.
KNOW.

SHOVE

OOPS!

GRAB

A RE-
SEARCH-
ER!!

SHE
STUDIED
BIRDS!

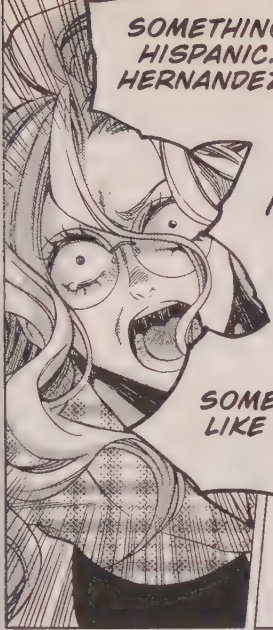
HER
NAME?

SHE
OFFERED TO
DONATE AN
EGG!

AND I
TOOK IT
FROM
THERE!

I DON'T
REMEM-
BER!

WAIT!!



SOMETHING
HISPANIC.
HERNANDEZ?

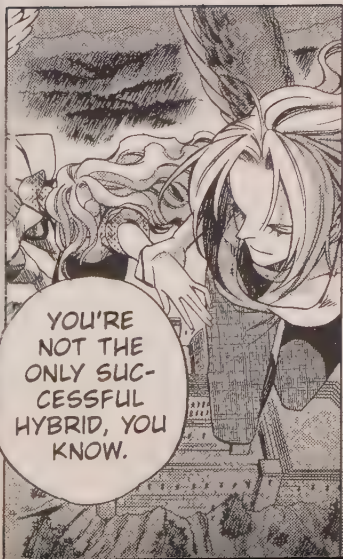
MARTINEZ?

SOMETHING
LIKE THAT!

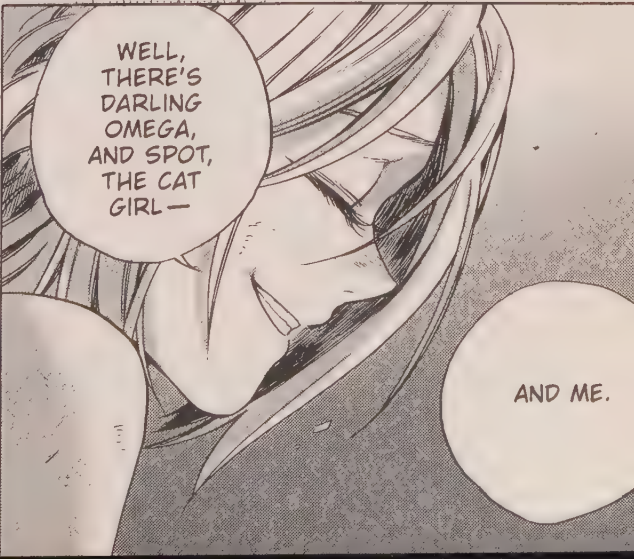
JEB WAS
TELLING THE
TRUTH.



DR. MARTINEZ
REALLY IS MY
MOTHER.



YOU'RE
NOT THE
ONLY SUC-
CESSFUL
HYBRID, YOU
KNOW.



WELL,
THERE'S
DARLING
OMEGA,
AND SPOT,
THE CAT
GIRL—

AND ME.

LET ME
GUESS.
YOU'RE HALF...
VULTURE?
HYENA?

GALAPAGOS
TORTOISE.

SOME KIND
OF MARINE
BOTTOM-
FEEDER?

I'M ONE
HUNDRED
AND SEVEN
YEARS OLD.

HUH.

AND YOU
DON'T LOOK
A DAY OVER
A HUNDRED
AND FIVE.

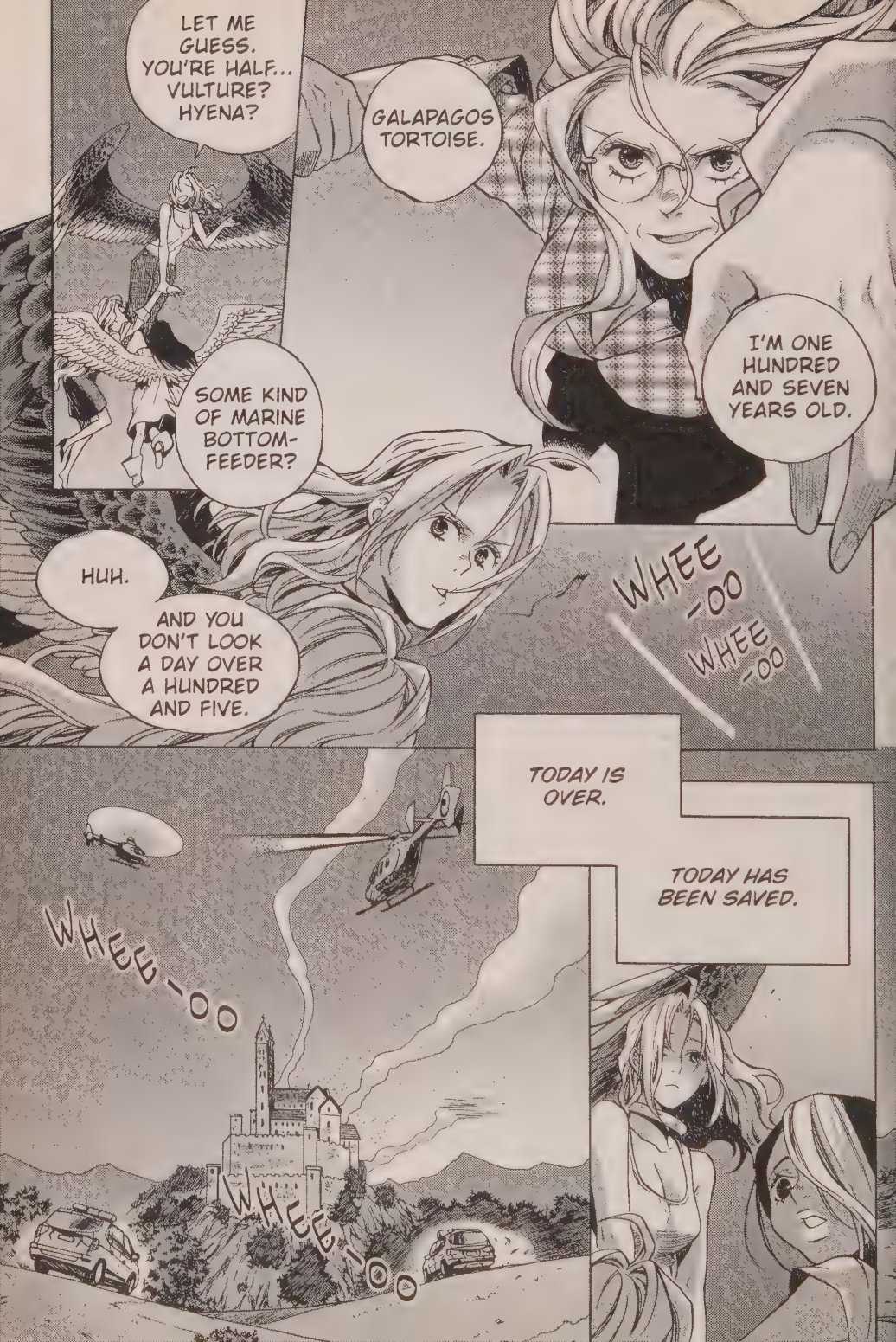
WHEE
-OO
WHEE
-OO

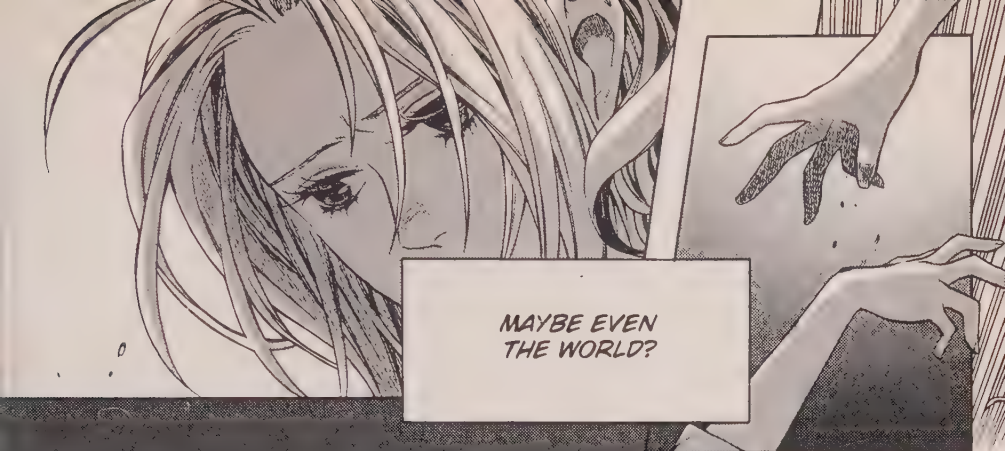
TODAY IS
OVER.

TODAY HAS
BEEN SAVED.

WHEE-OO

WHEE-OO





MAYBE EVEN
THE WORLD?



BYE.

AAACK!

!!

THIS
ISN'T
YOU,
MAX.

WHY'S THAT,
JEB?

BECAUSE
YOU DIDN'T
DESIGN ME
THAT WAY?

NO. BECAUSE
THAT'S NOT
WHO YOU ARE
AS A PERSON.



IT'S ALL YOU.
YOU'RE JUST
NOT A KILLER.

NO ONE
DESIGNED IT.

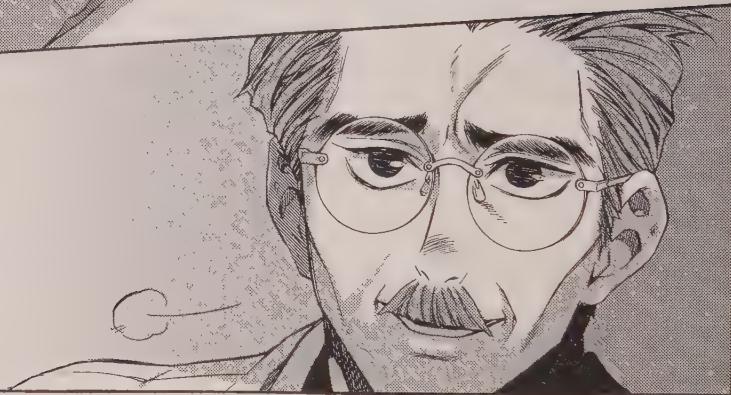
YOU'VE
SHOWN THAT
AGAIN AND
AGAIN.

AND IT MAKES
ME PROUDER
THAN ANYTHING
ELSE ABOUT
YOU.

YES,
IT'S
TRUE.



I AM
PRETTY
WONDERFUL.



MAXIMUM RIDE





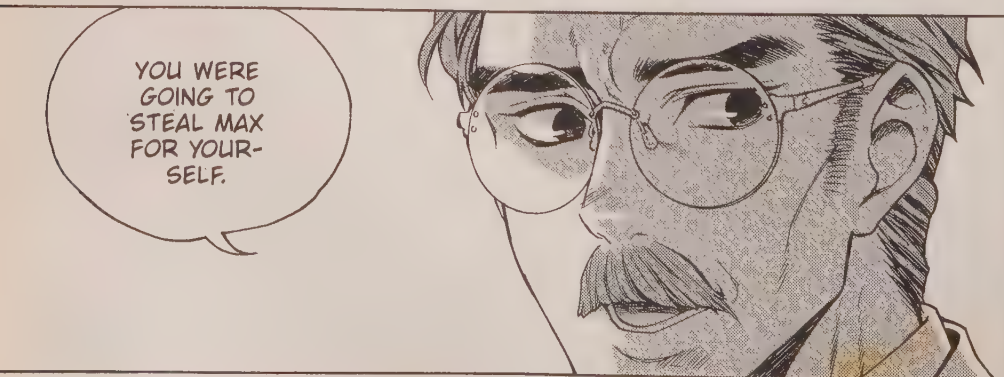
MAXIMUM
RIDE
ARI'S STORY



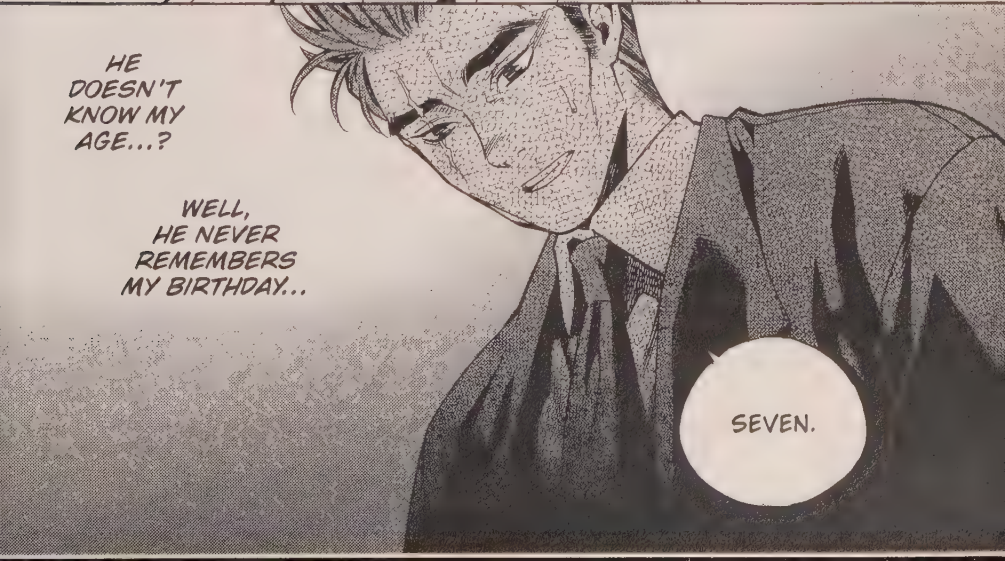
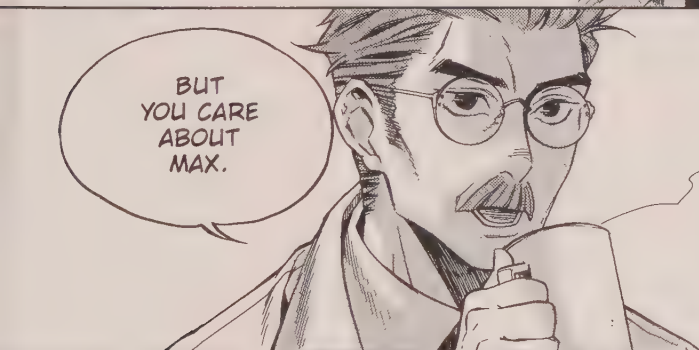
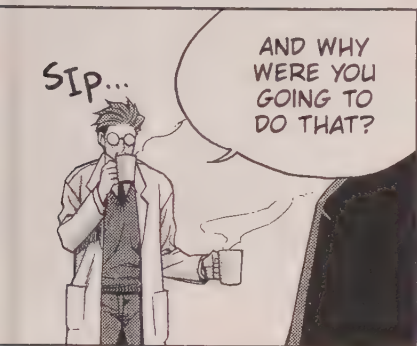
I SEE. SO
YOU HAD A
PLAN.

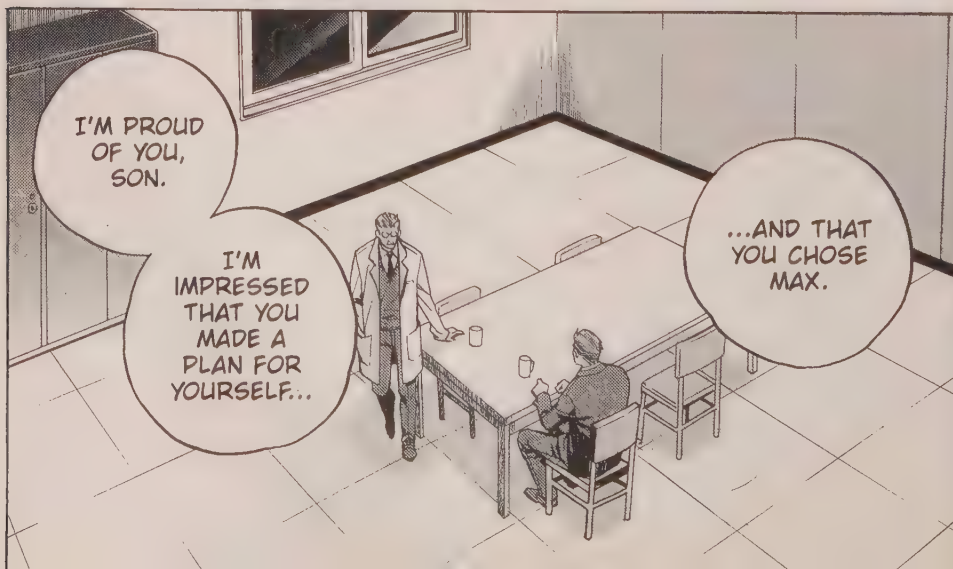
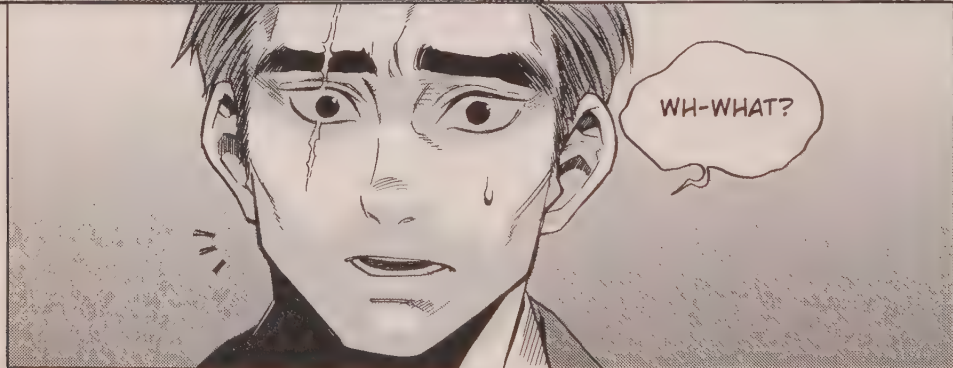
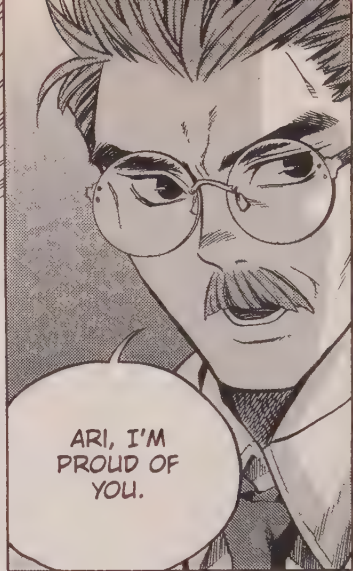
...YEAH.

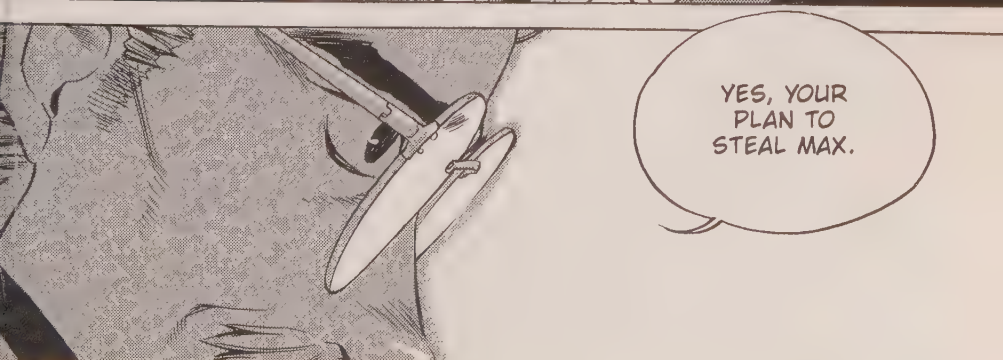
POUR



YOU WERE
GOING TO
'STEAL MAX
FOR YOUR-
SELF.







I'LL HELP
YOU MAKE
IT HAPPEN.

WE'LL
TAKE OUT
THE REST
OF THE
FLOCK...

...BUT YOU
HAVE TO
GRAB MAX.
WHERE WERE
YOU GOING TO
TAKE HER?

...A
PLACE.

WE'LL WORK
OUT THE
DETAILS LATER.
I'VE ALREADY
GOT PEOPLE
TRACKING
THE FLOCK.

IN THE
MEANTIME,
GET SOME
REST, EAT
SOME-
THING.

PAT

PAT

CREAK

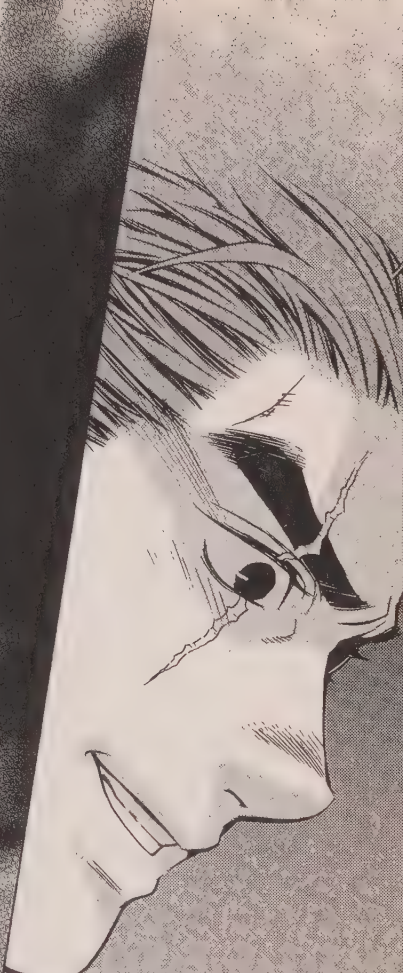
.....

DAD SAID
HE'S PROUD
OF ME.

DAD'S GOING
TO HELP. I'M
GOING TO GET
MAX ALL TO
MYSELF.

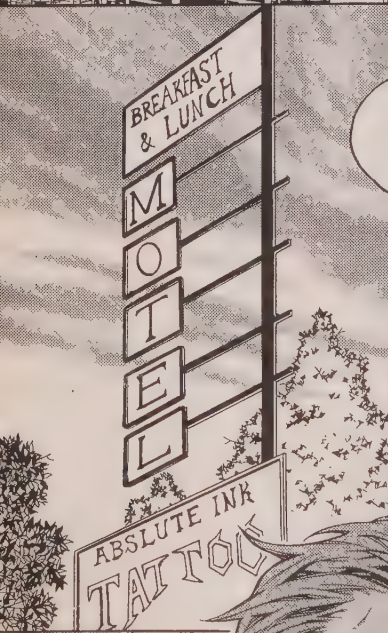
IT'S LIKE
CHRISTMAS
AND MY BIRTHDAY
AND SORT OF
HALLOWEEN, ALL
ROLLED UP
INTO ONE.

...AT
LEAST, I
THINK IT
IS...

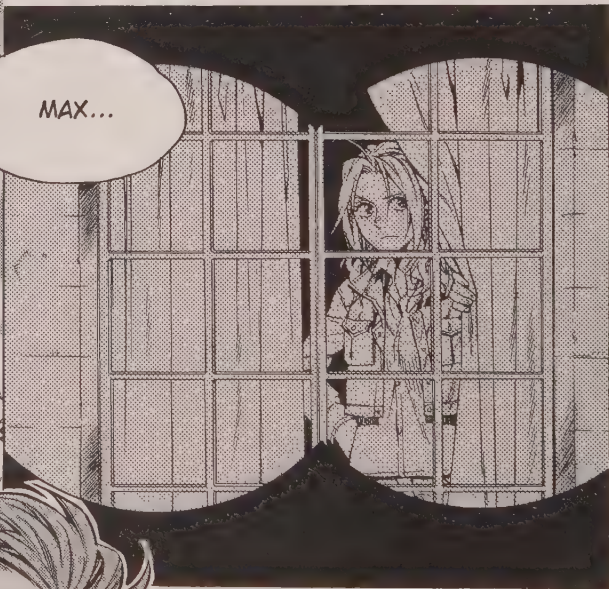


HEE-HEE...

ATLANTA



MAX...



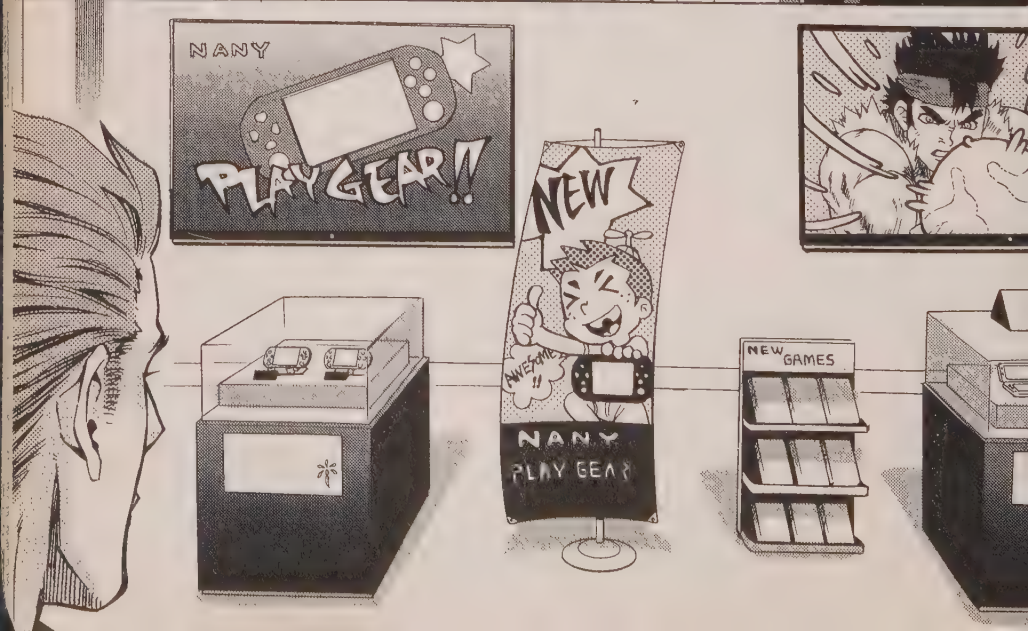
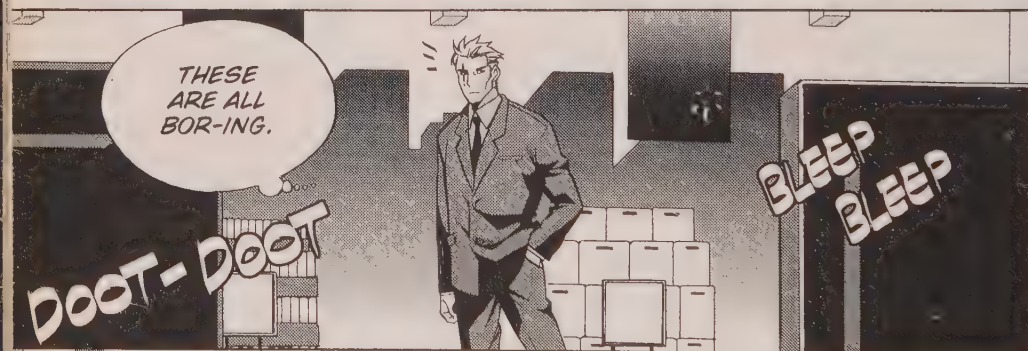
OKAY!

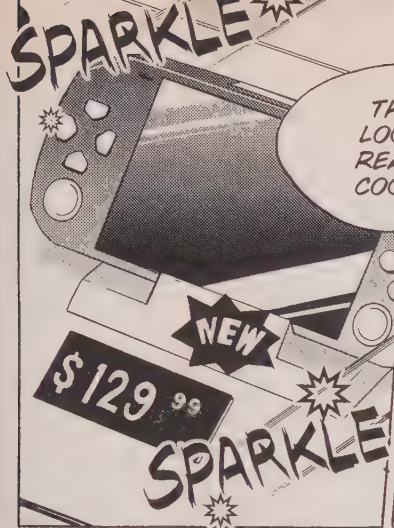
We will wait nearby till it gets dark.

I SHOULD GO
CELEBRATE.

in MART





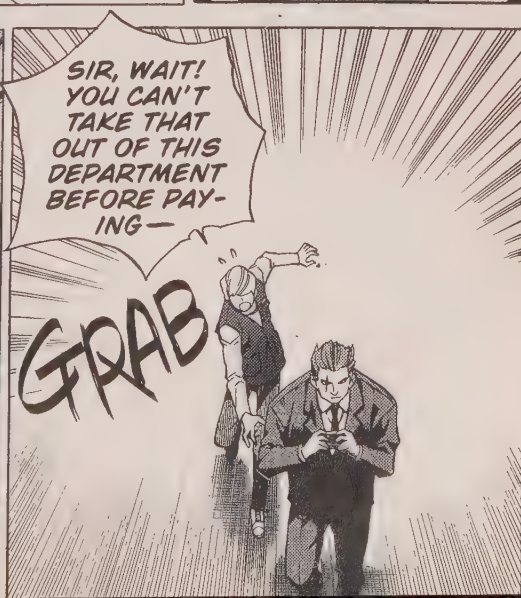
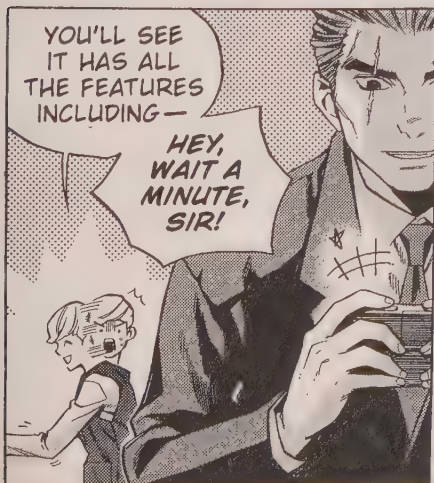
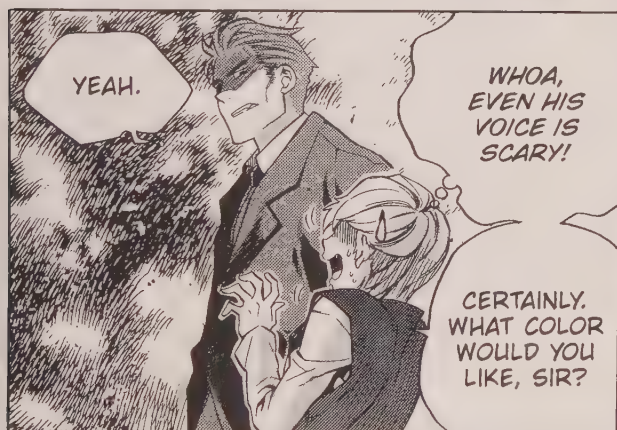


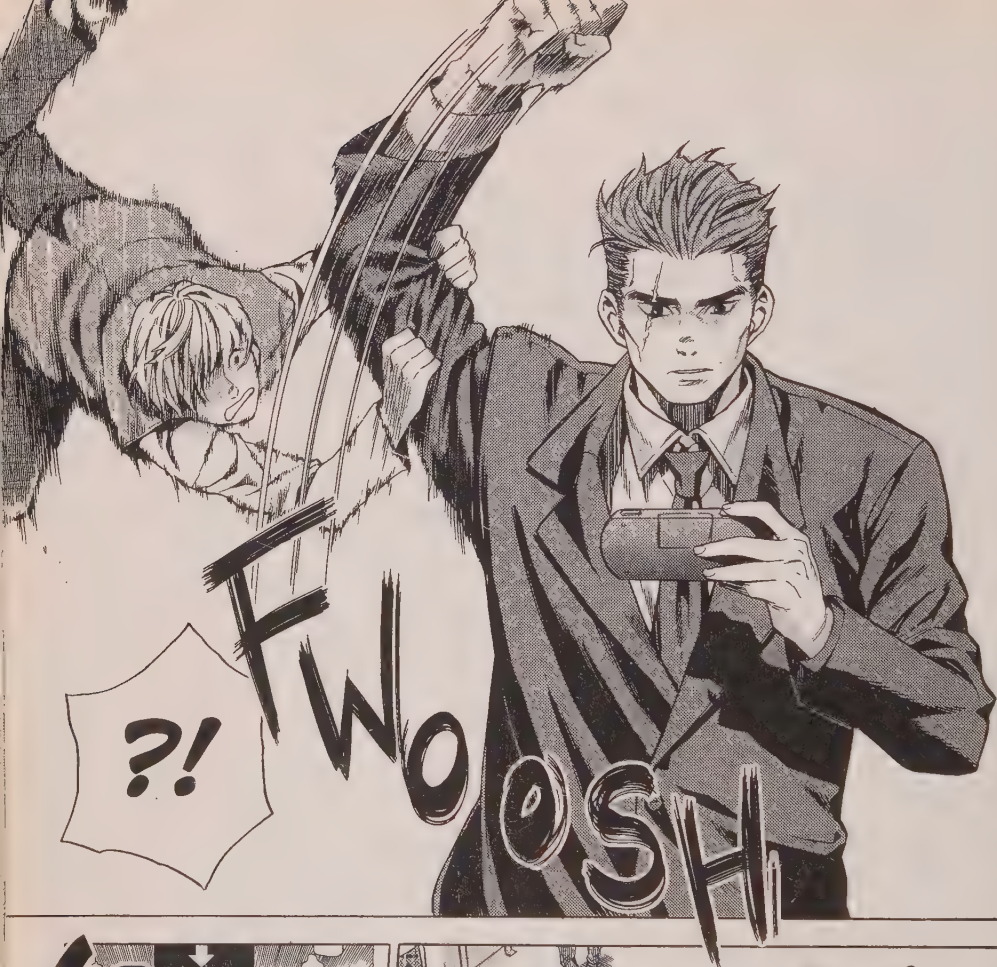
THAT
LOOKS
REALLY
COOL...

STARE —

CAN I HELP
YOU, SIR?

THESE
BABIES ARE
REALLY HOT.
WOULD YOU
CARE TO SEE
ONE?







STOP
RIGHT
THERE!

YOU'RE
NOT
GOING—

!!



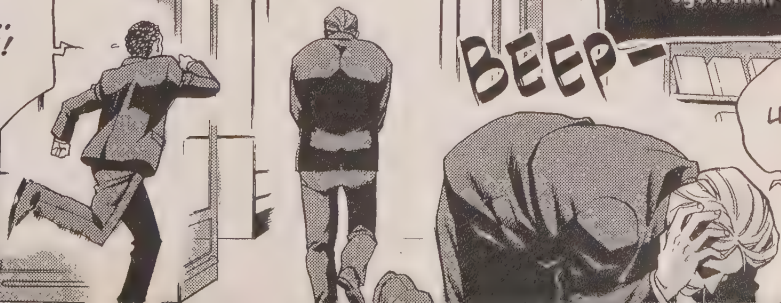
BEEP—BEEP—BEEP—

HEY...
HEY!!

You have
triggered
our security
system...

BEEP—

UGH...







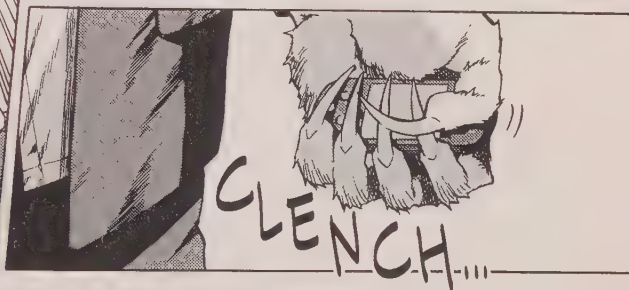
RUN!!

MONSTER!

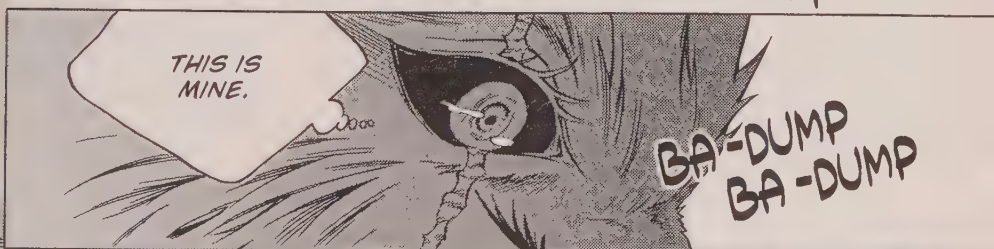


...HEH.

IDIOTS.



CLENCH...

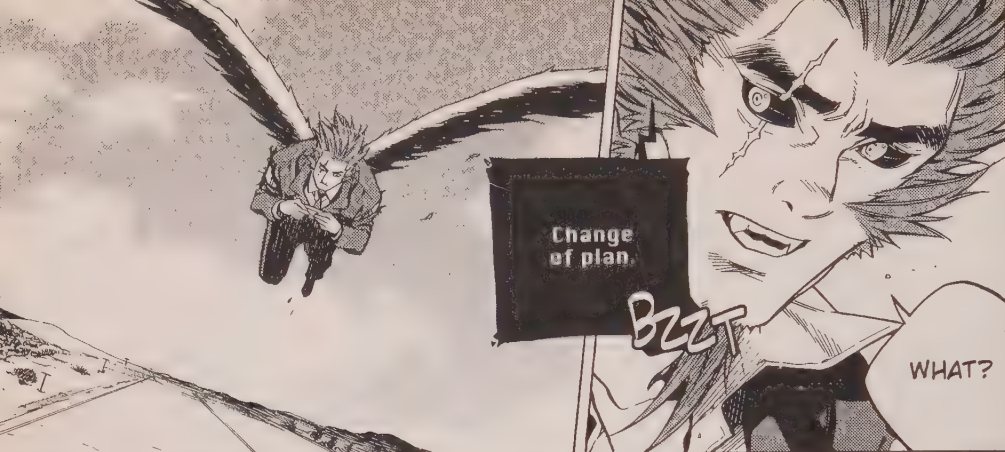


THIS IS
MINE.

BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP



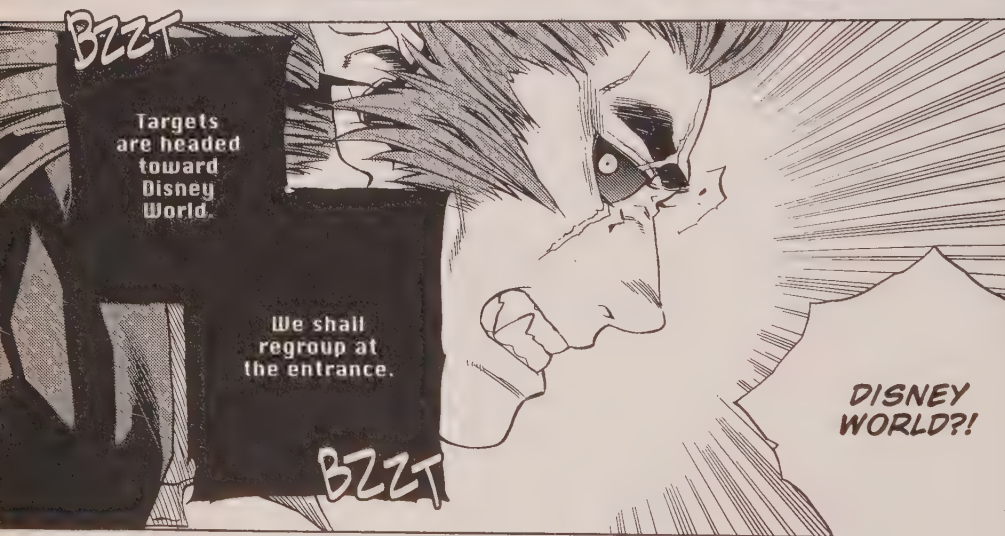
FWOOOSH



Change
of plan.

BZZT

WHAT?



BZZT
Targets
are headed
toward
Disney
World.

We shall
regroup at
the entrance.

BZZT

DISNEY
WORLD?!

THEY'RE NOT
ON VACATION!
THEY'RE ON
THE RUN!

THEY'RE
RUNNING
FOR THEIR
LIVES!

DEATH IS
FOLLOWING
THEM LIKE A
BULLET...

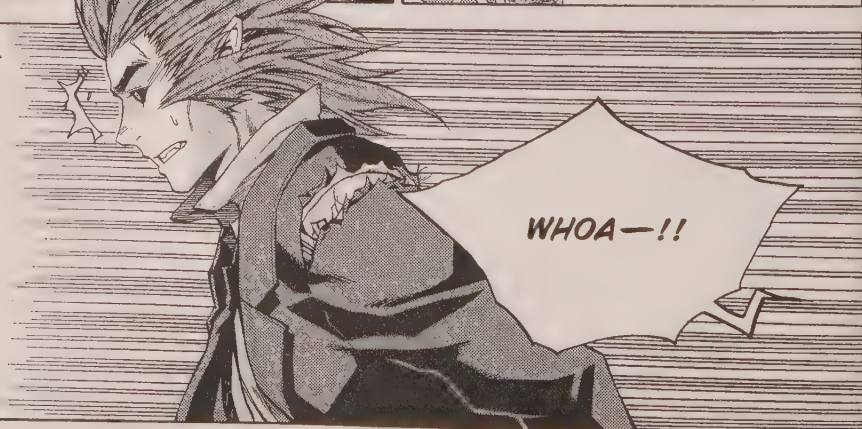
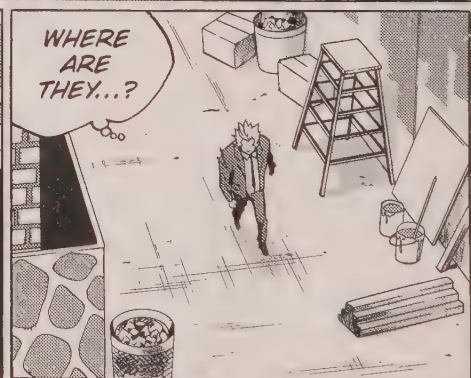
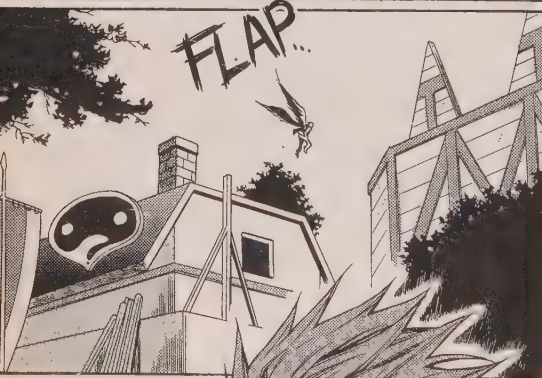
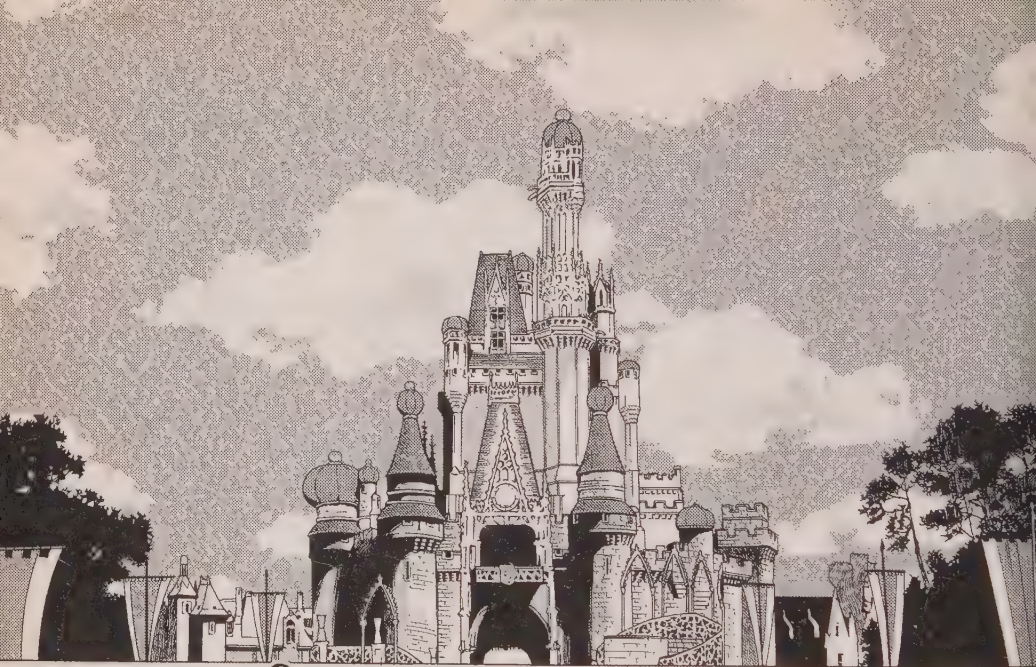
...AND THEY'RE
ON THE BIG
THUNDER
MOUNTAIN
RAILROAD?

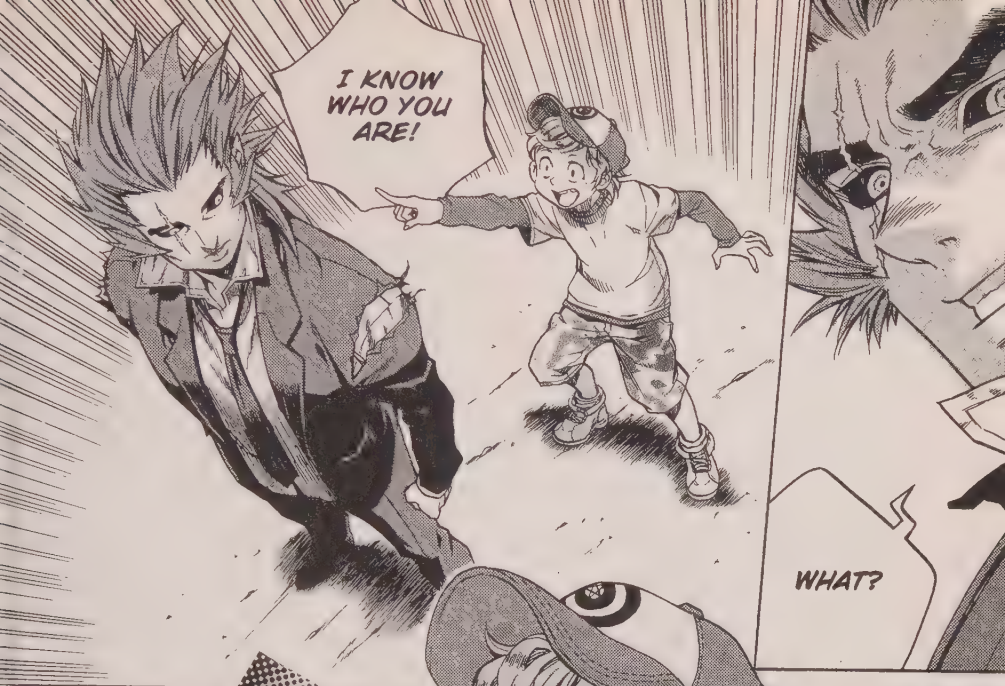
THEY
MUST BE
OUT OF
THEIR
MINDS...

DOOT-DOOT

BLEEP
BLEEP

WHICH WAY
IS DISNEY
WORLD,
ANYWAY?



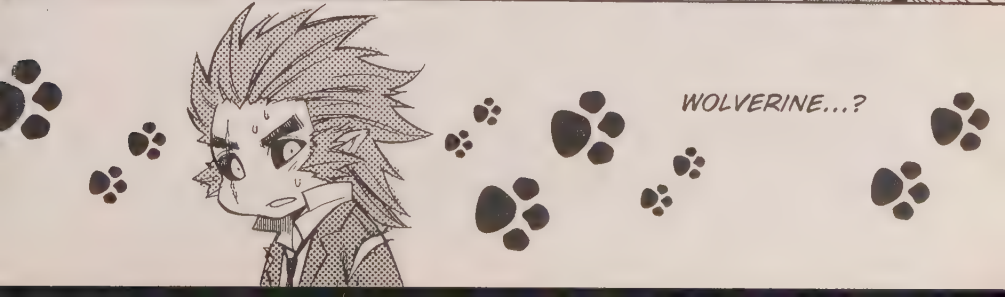


I KNOW
WHO YOU
ARE!

WHAT?



YOU'RE
WOLVERINE!



WOLVERINE...?

YOU'RE
SO COOL!

YOU LOOK
REAL
STRONG!

FWIP

FWIP



YOU'RE
TOTALLY
MY
FAVORITE!

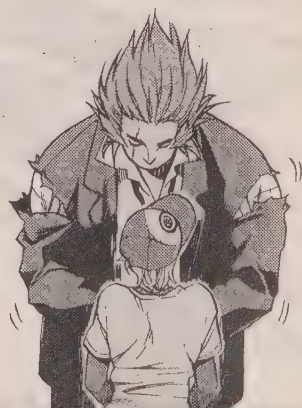
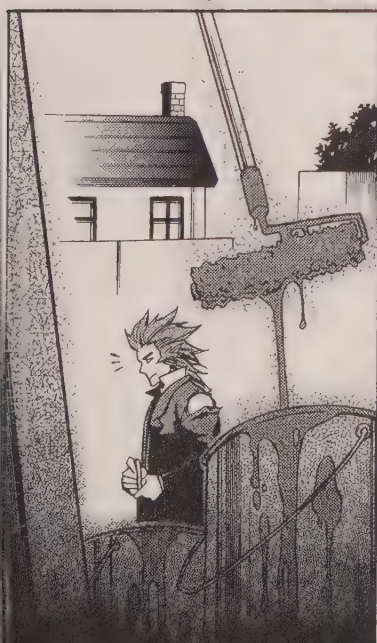
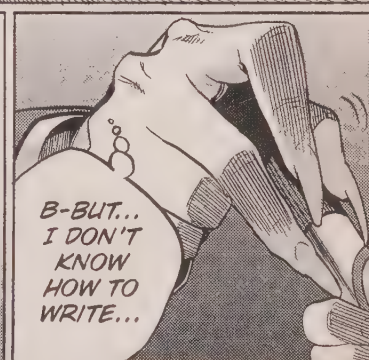
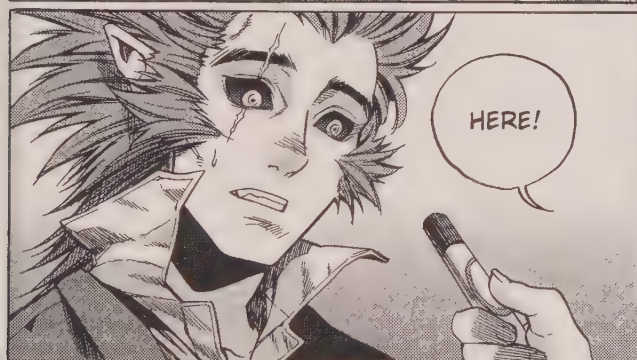
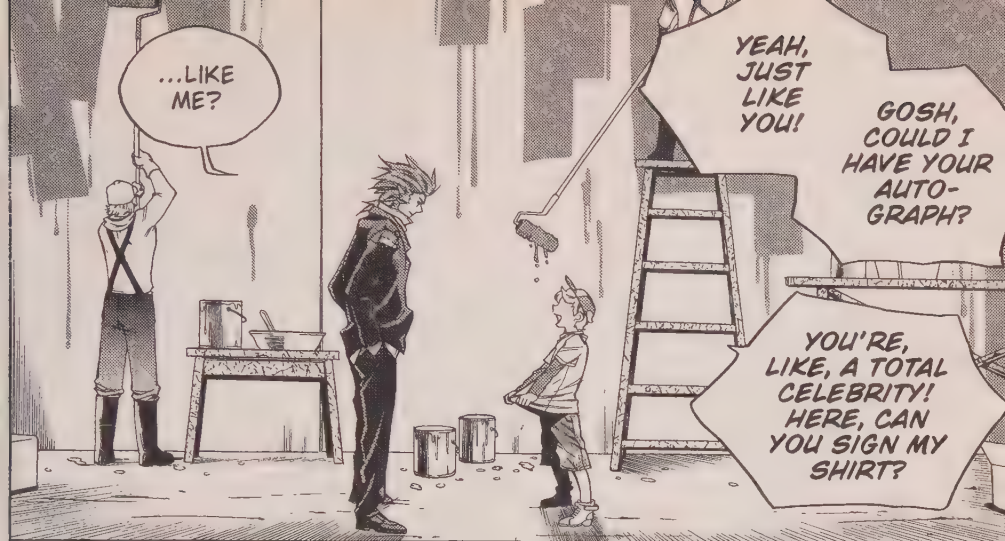


I WISH
I WAS
LIKE
YOU!



NO ONE
HAS EVER,
EVER SAID
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT
TO ME.

EVEN MY
OWN FATHER
CHOSE THE
BIRD KIDS
OVER ME...



WHOA,
THIS IS,
LIKE, UBER-
COOL!
YOU'RE THE
BEST!!



I'LL NEVER
WASH THIS
SHIRT
AGAIN!

I CAN'T
WAIT TO TELL
EVERYONE
AT SCHOOL!

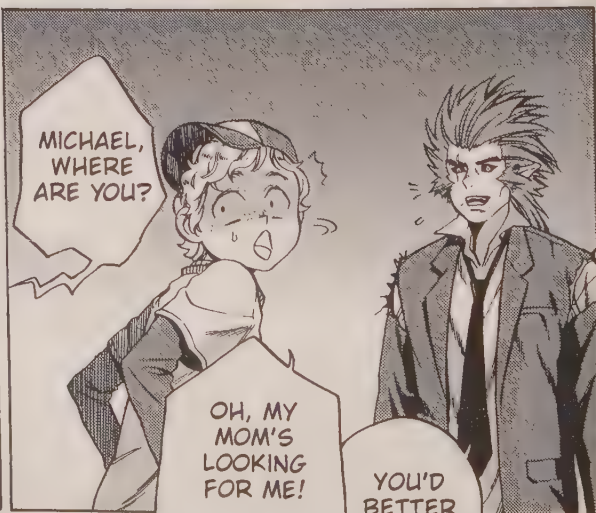
SO
COOL!
YAY!!!

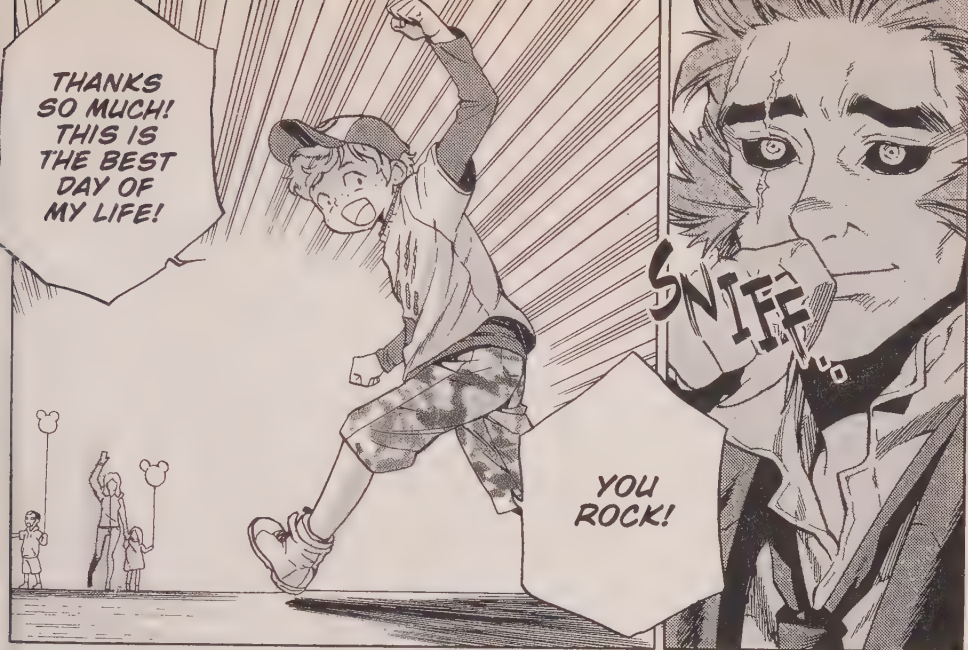


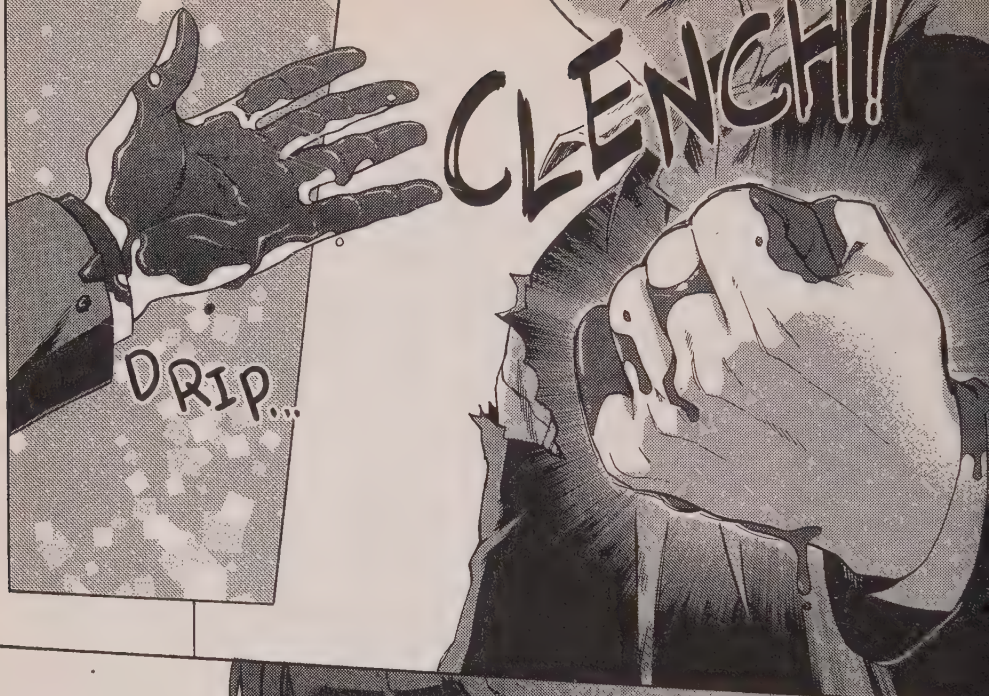
MICHAEL,
WHERE
ARE YOU?

OH, MY
MOM'S
LOOKING
FOR ME!

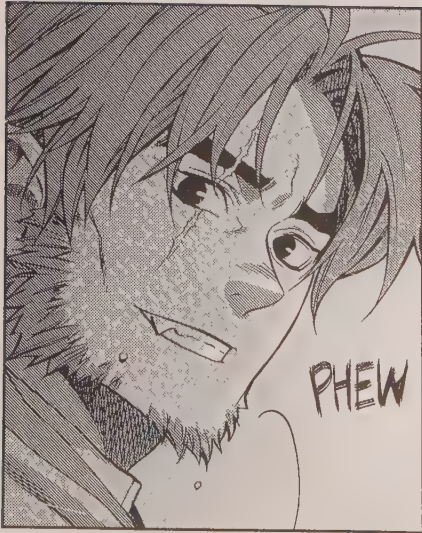
YOU'D
BETTER
GO.





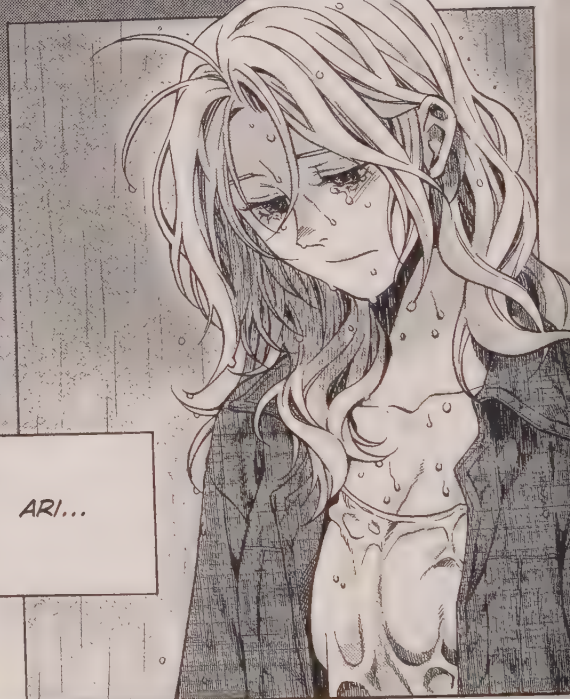
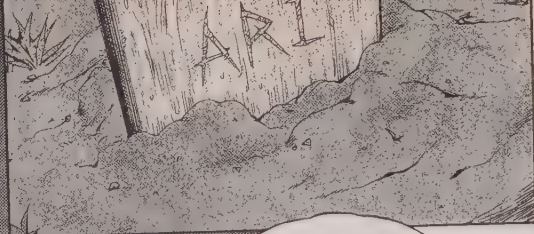


MAXIMUM
RIDE



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 41





ARI...

HE'S BIG
ENOUGH TO
FILL THE
BOX...

...BUT HE
WAS ONLY
SEVEN.

MY HALF
BROTHER...

I'D FIRST
KNOWN ARI AS
A CUTE LITTLE
KID WHO USED
TO FOLLOW
ME AROUND
THE SCHOOL.

THEN THE
FLOCK AND I
ESCAPED FROM
THE SCHOOL
WITH JEB,
LEAVING ARI
BEHIND...

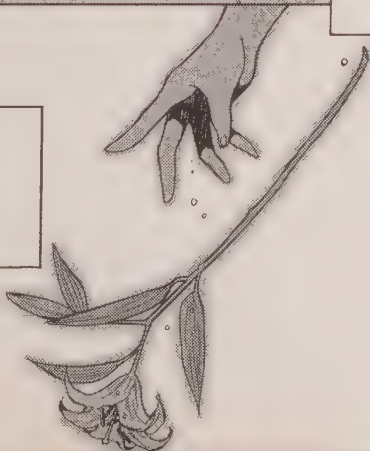
THEN HE'D TURNED
UP ERASERFIED, A
GROTESQUE HALF
HUMAN, HALF WOLF.



HE'D BEEN
TURNED INTO A
MONSTER, AND
THEY'D SENT
HIM AFTER US,
ONLY TO HAVE
HIM BE ON OUR
SIDE AT THE
END...

...UNTIL HE
EXPIRED.

I HOPE
YOU REST
IN PEACE
NOW...



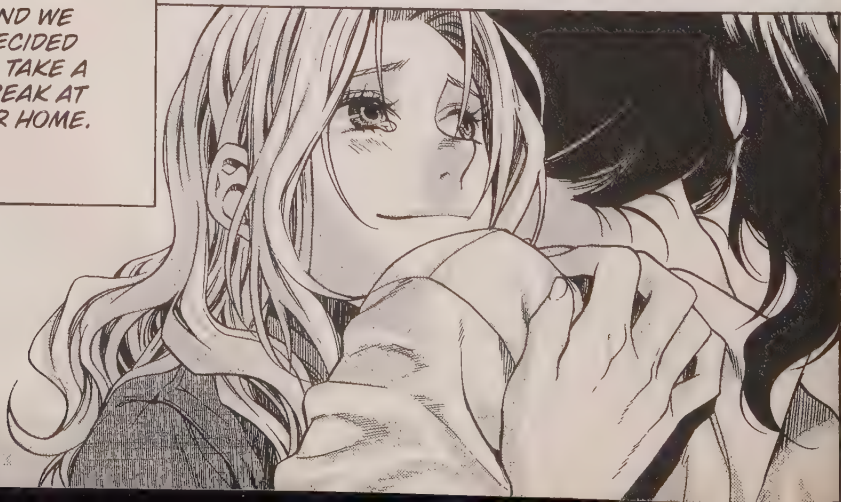
AFTER
THE SMALL
FUNERAL...

...WE MET
UP WITH
THE REST OF
THE FLOCK
IN ARIZONA,
AT DR.
MARTINEZ'S
HOUSE.



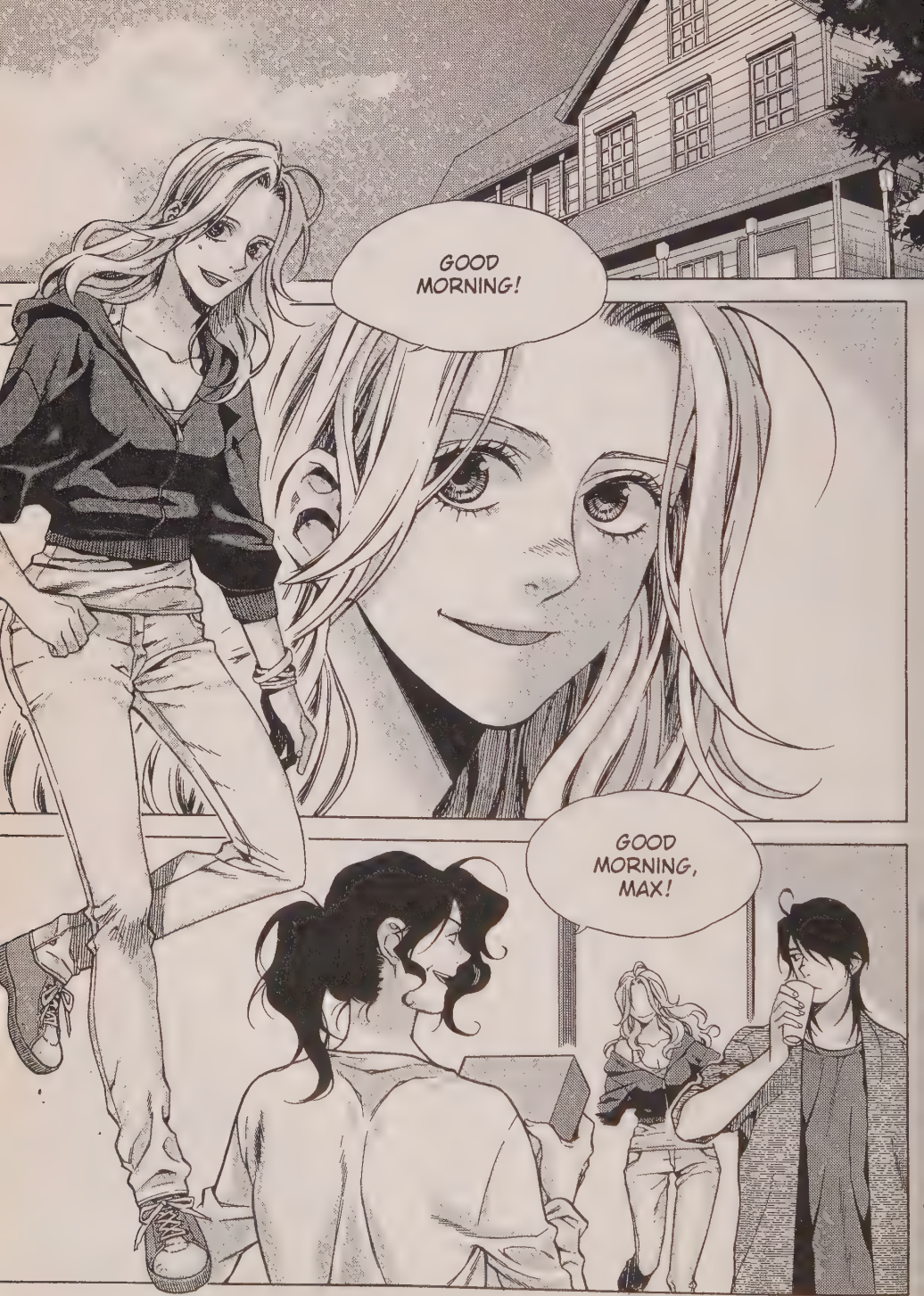
IT WAS
A SUDDEN
VISIT, BUT DR.
MARTINEZ AND
ELLA...NO,
MY MOTHER
AND SISTER,
WELCOMED ME
WITH OPEN
ARMS.

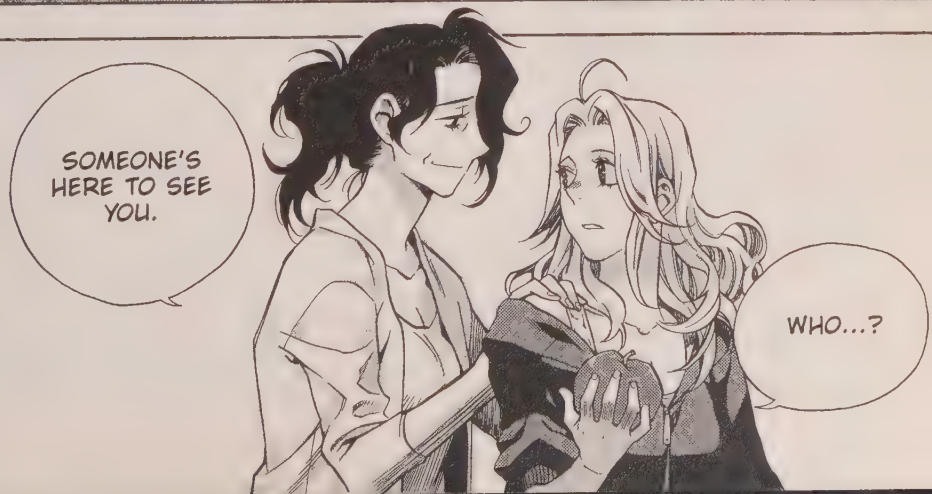
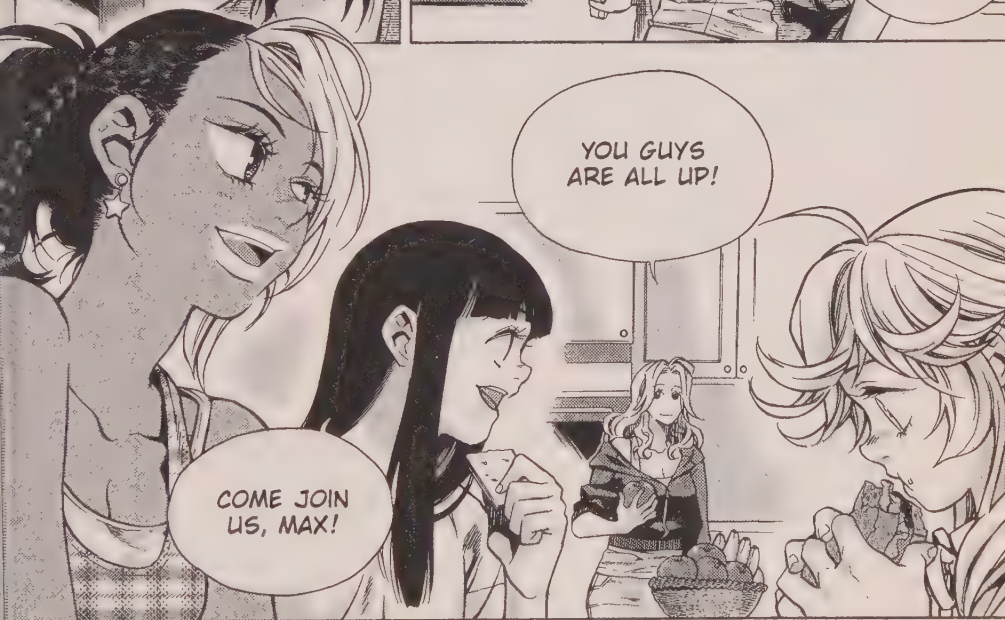
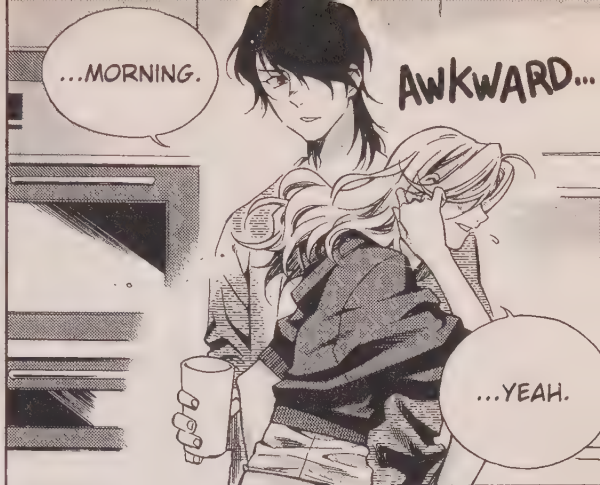
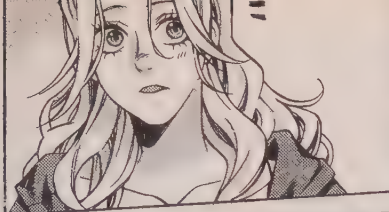
AND WE
DECIDED
TO TAKE A
BREAK AT
HER HOME.

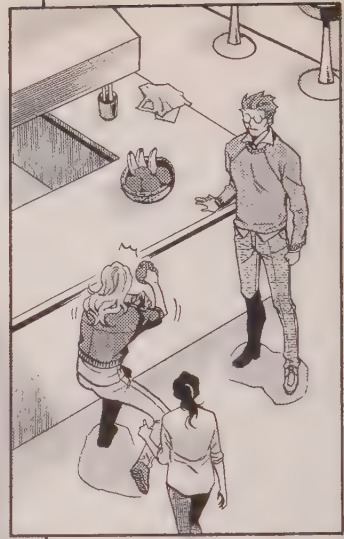
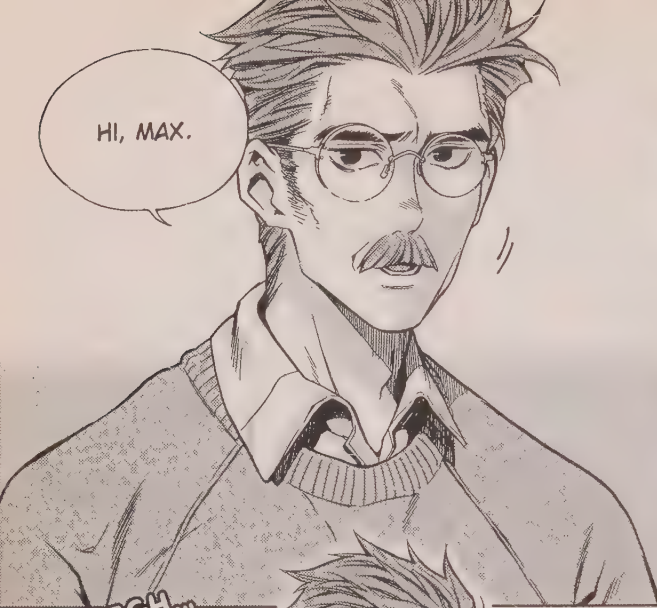


*A FEW
WEEKS
LATER—
ARIZONA*









...SIGH...

YOU DON'T
NEED TO
BE SO ON
GUARD WITH
ME...

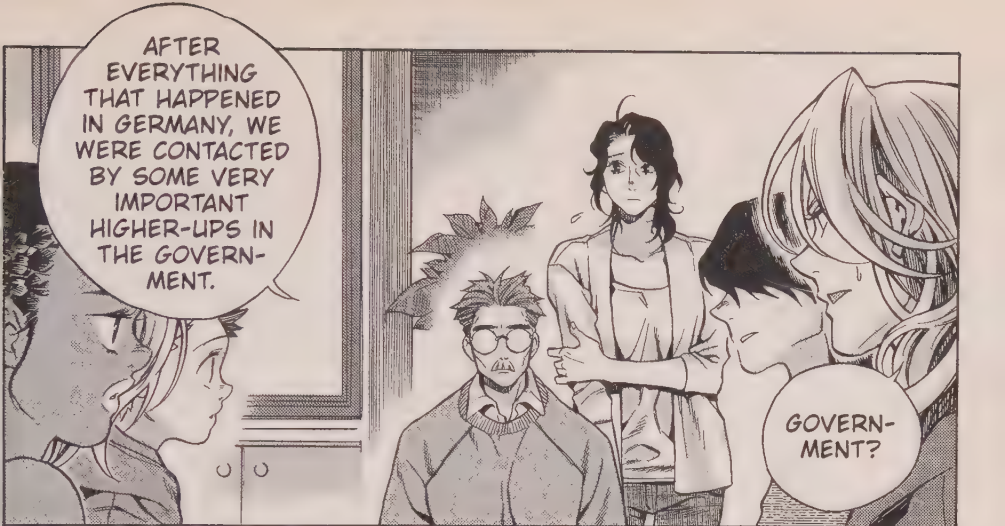
WHY
ARE YOU
HERE?



WHY
DON'T
YOU SIT
DOWN?

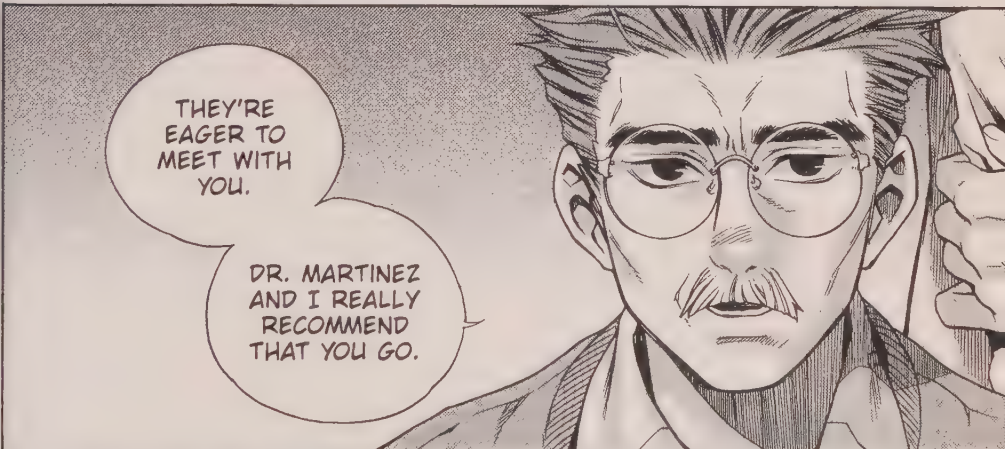
ELLA, WILL
YOU GIVE US
A MOMENT?

SURE.



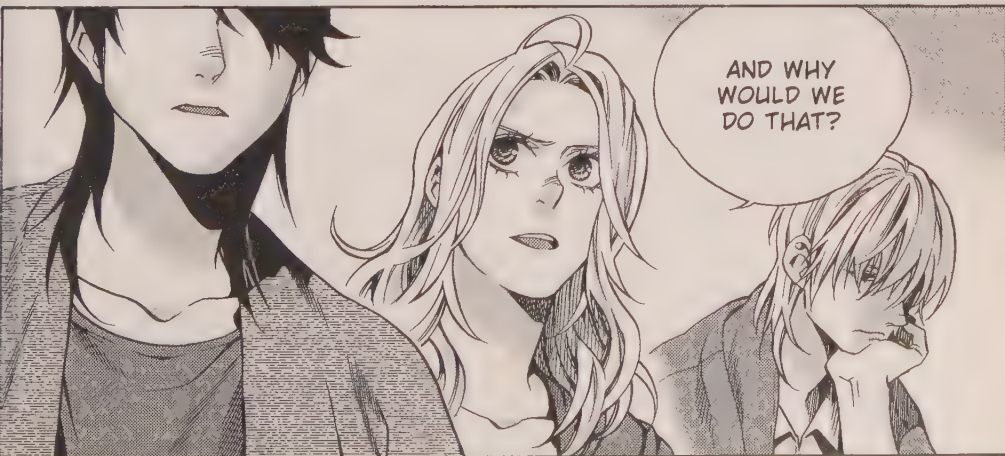
AFTER
EVERYTHING
THAT HAPPENED
IN GERMANY, WE
WERE CONTACTED
BY SOME VERY
IMPORTANT
HIGHER-UPS IN
THE GOVERN-
MENT.

GOVERN-
MENT?

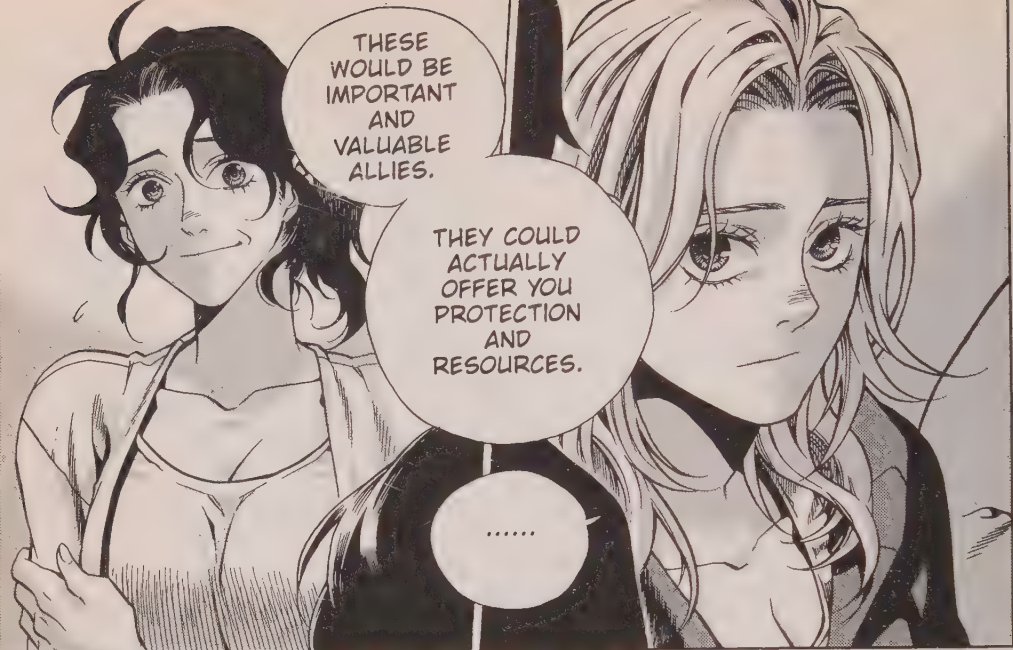


THEY'RE
EAGER TO
MEET WITH
YOU.

DR. MARTINEZ
AND I REALLY
RECOMMEND
THAT YOU GO.



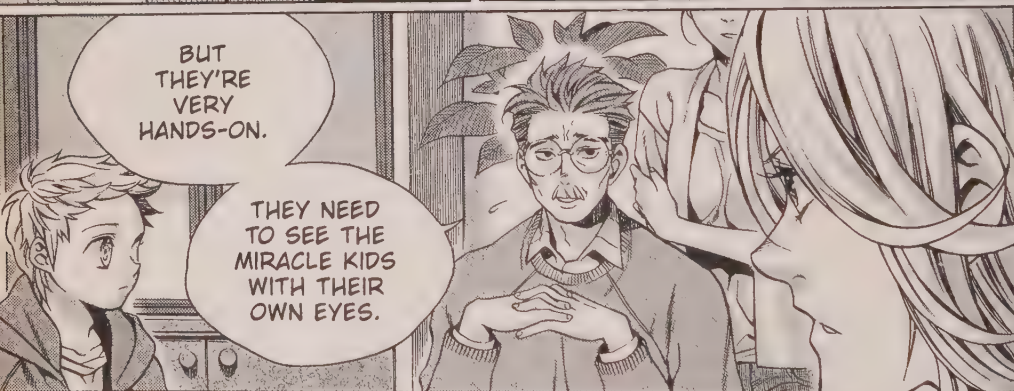
AND WHY
WOULD WE
DO THAT?



THESE
WOULD BE
IMPORTANT
AND
VALUABLE
ALLIES.

THEY COULD
ACTUALLY
OFFER YOU
PROTECTION
AND
RESOURCES.

.....



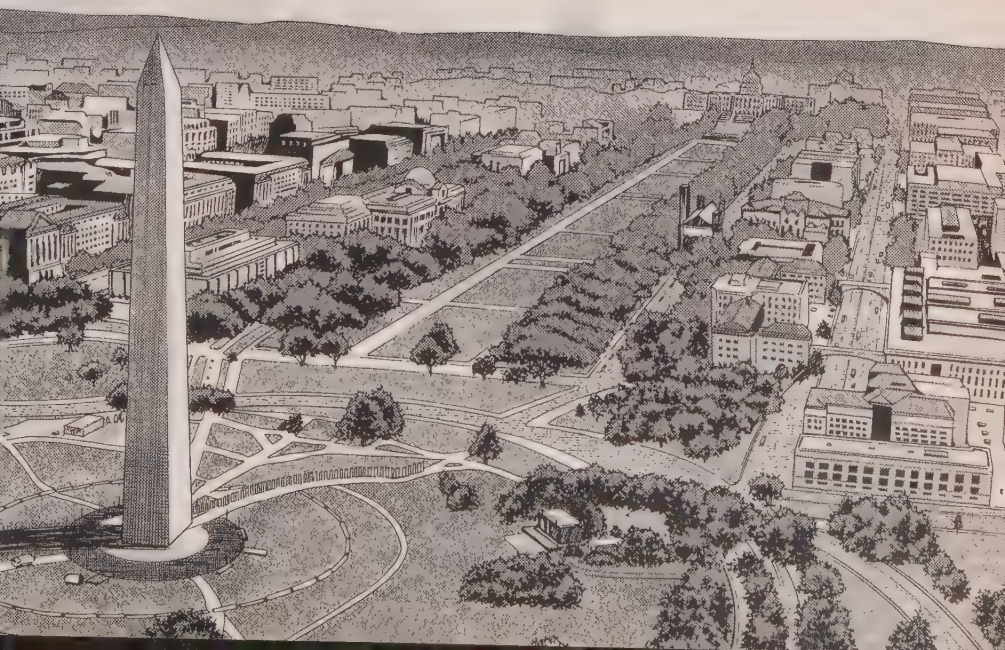
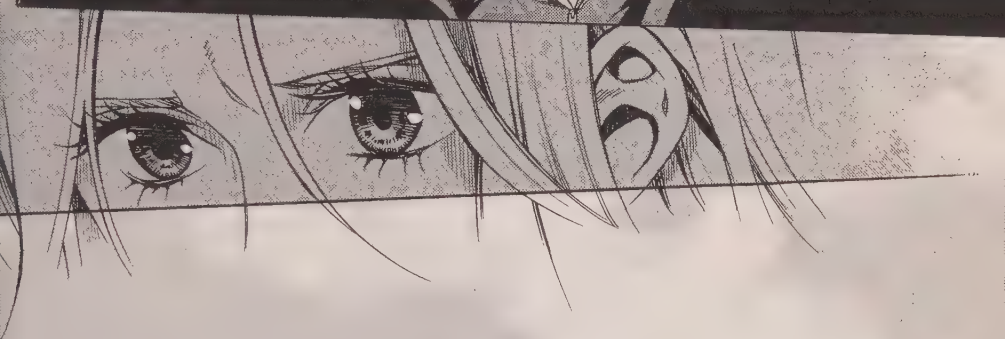
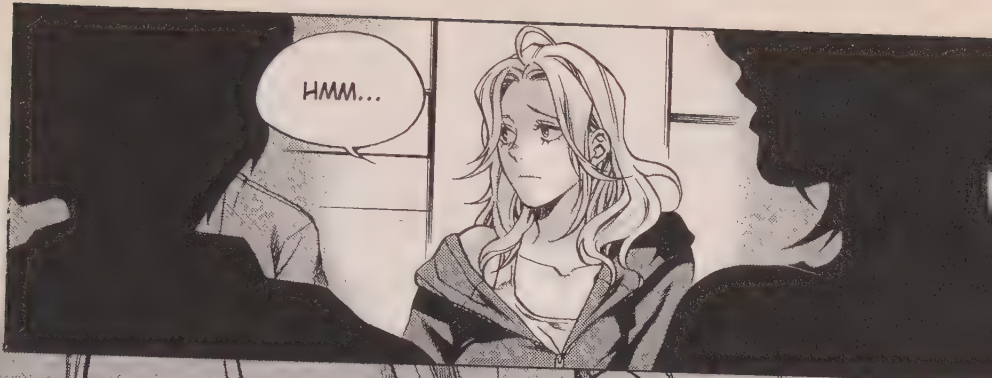
BUT
THEY'RE
VERY
HANDS-ON.

THEY NEED
TO SEE THE
MIRACLE KIDS
WITH THEIR
OWN EYES.

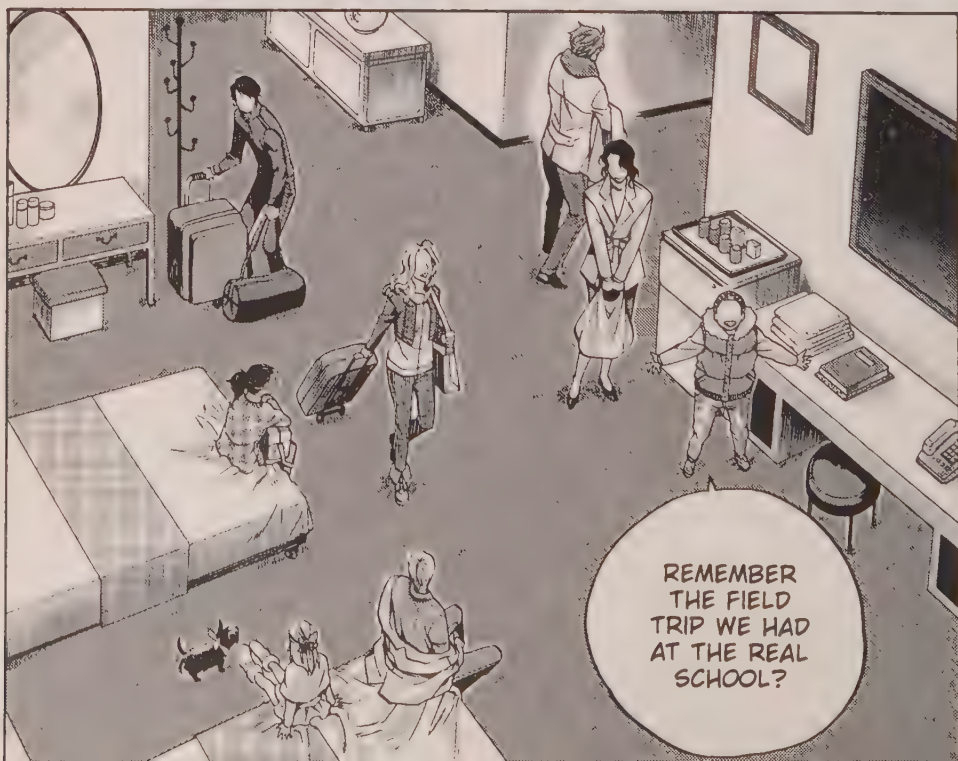
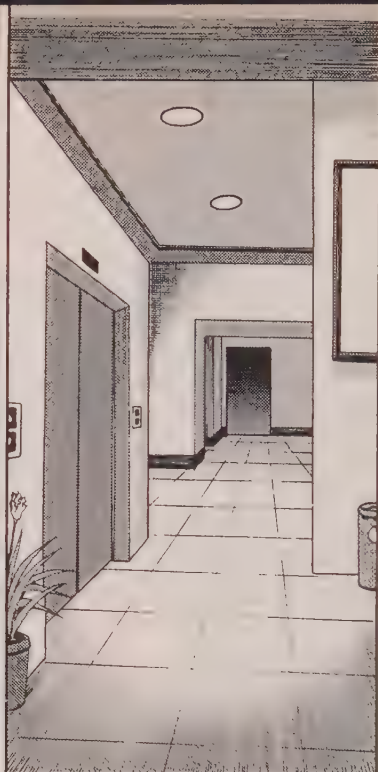


OF COURSE,
IT'S UP TO
YOU...

...BUT I DO
THINK IT
WOULD BE A
GOOD IDEA
TO MEET
THEM, MAX.



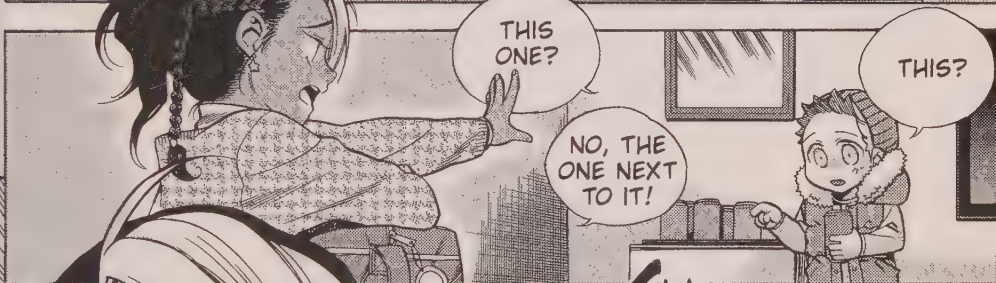
WASHINGTON, D.C.



REMEMBER
THE FIELD
TRIP WE HAD
AT THE REAL
SCHOOL?



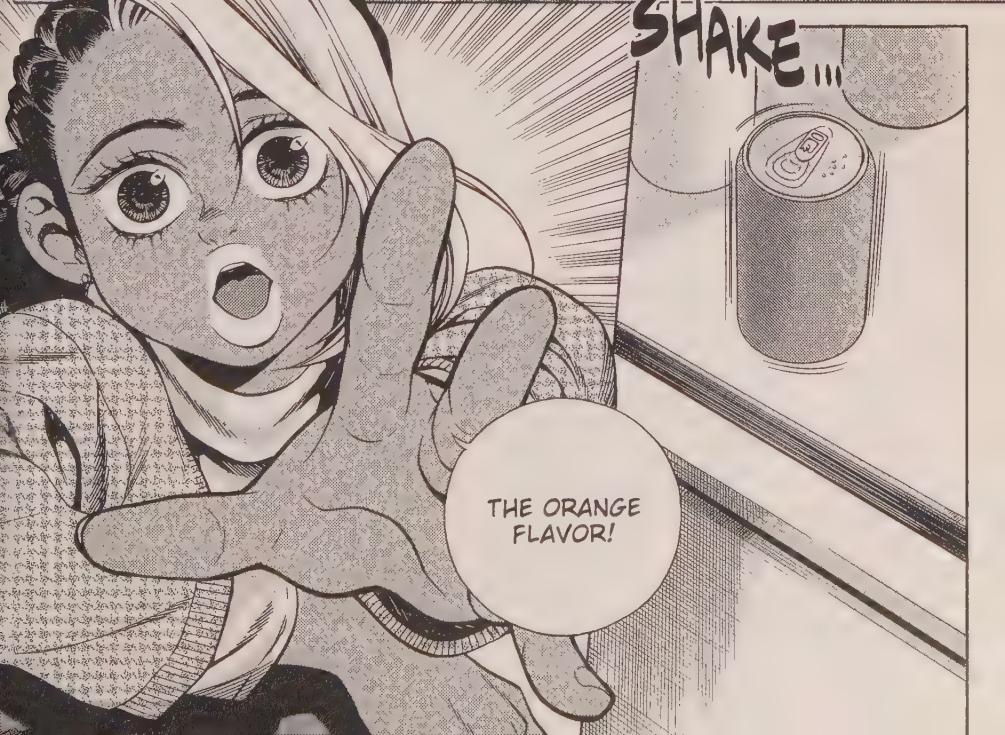
AH, GAZZY,
I WANT A
SODA TOO.



THIS
ONE?

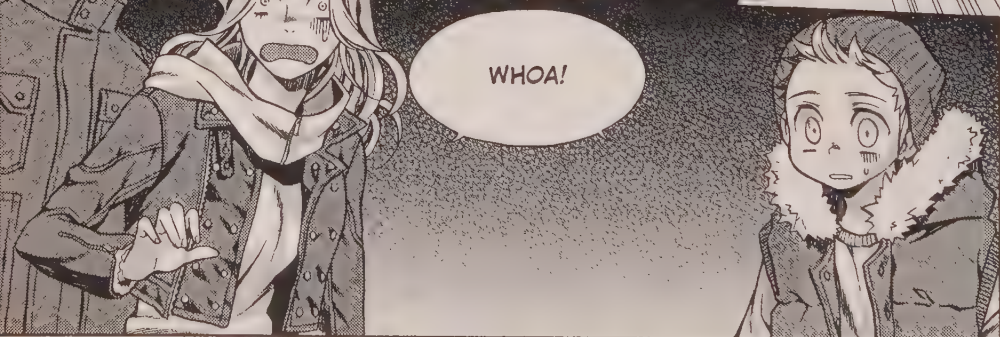
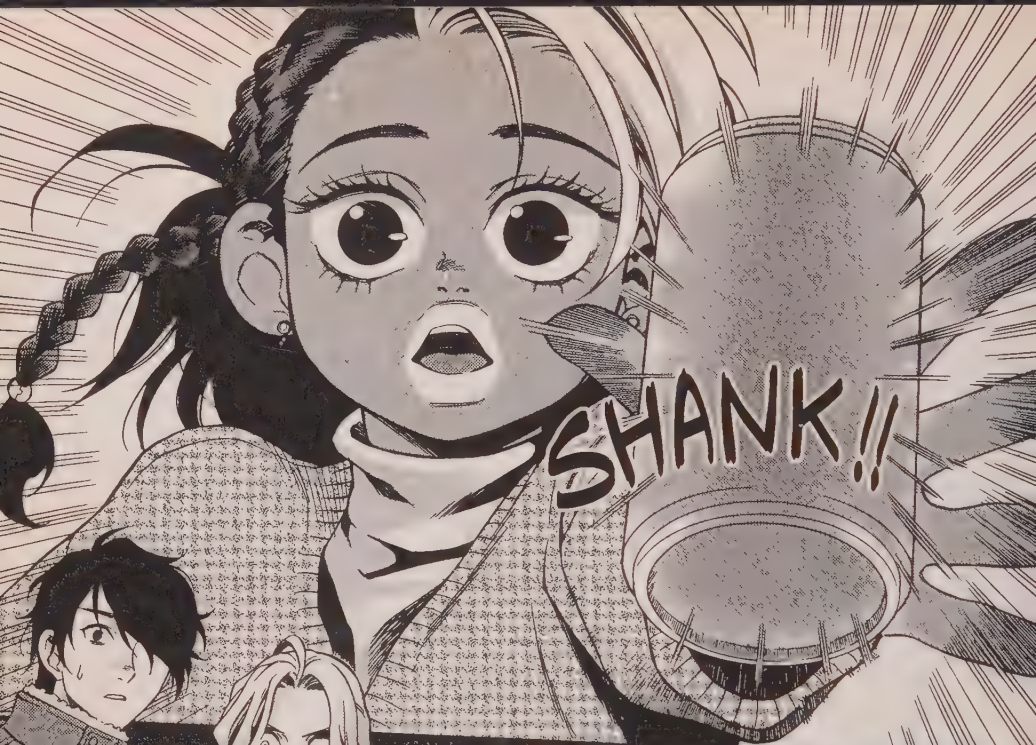
NO, THE
ONE NEXT
TO IT!

THIS?



SHAKE...

THE ORANGE
FLAVOR!



I'M
MAGNET
GIRL!

?

LOOK!

YAP!

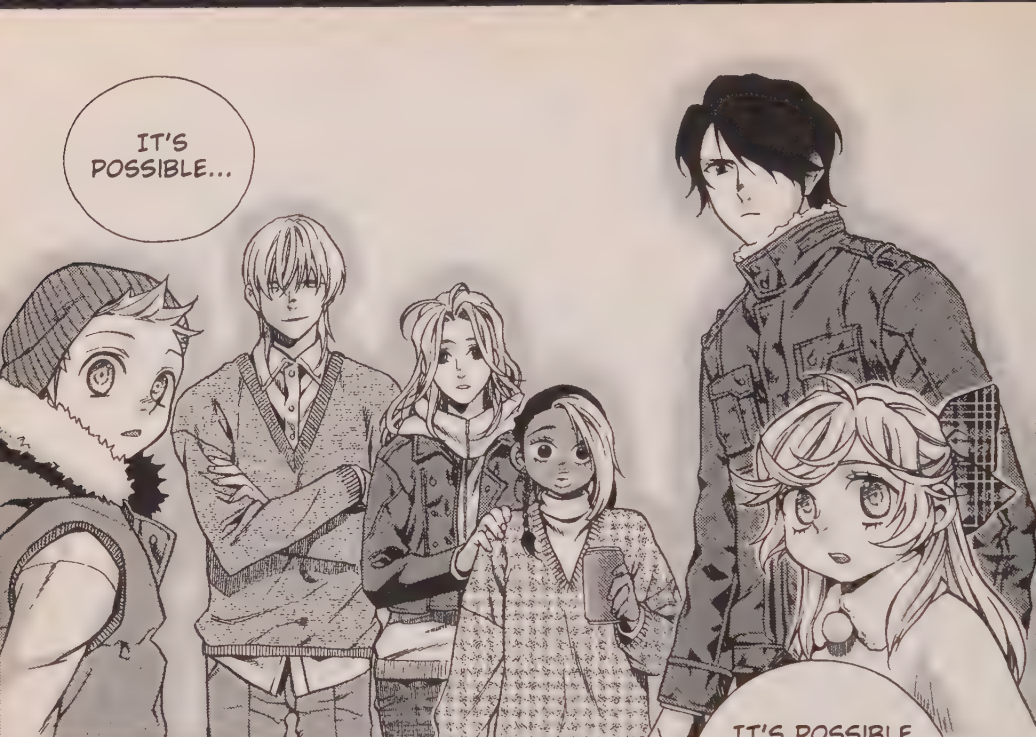
FWIP..

I BET YOU
CAN'T DO
IT—

TWOOSH

SEE?

I-I DON'T KNOW
WHY YOU CAN DO
THAT. IT WAS NEVER
PROGRAMMED IN.



IT'S
POSSIBLE...

IT'S POSSIBLE
THAT MAYBE
YOU GUYS ARE
STARTING TO
MUTATE ON
YOUR OWN.

HA-HA...

CAN IT BE...
THAT WE
ARE MAKING
PROGRESS...?

THE NEXT MORNING

MAX,
MAX!

FLAP

LOOK
AT MY
WINGS!

WOW, THEY
LOOK GREAT,
NUDGE!

ALL
THE BABY
FEATHERS
ARE GONE.

YOU'RE ALL
GROWN NOW,
NUDGE!

PAT
PAT

YOU LOOK GREAT
TOO, MAX. THAT
TOP IS TOTALLY
HOT! YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU'RE AT
LEAST SIXTEEN!



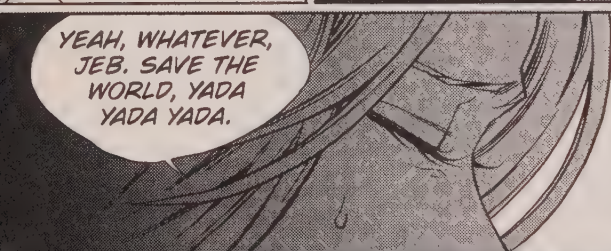
**OKAY,
MAX.**

**THIS MEETING
IS VERY
IMPORTANT,
SO NO FUNNY
BUSINESS.**

**JUST
REMEMBER
YOUR
MISSION,
KEEP YOUR
MIND
OPEN...**



**...AND
LISTEN TO
WHAT THEY
HAVE TO
SAY.**



**YEAH, WHATEVER,
JEB. SAVE THE
WORLD, YADA
YADA YADA.**

**I'M NOT JEB.
YOU WERE
WRONG ABOUT
THAT.**



HUH?

**YOU HAVE
PART OF THE
PICTURE,
MAX...**



**SOMETIMES WHEN
YOU'RE AT YOUR
MOST CERTAIN,
THAT'S WHEN
EVERYTHING YOU
KNOW IS WRONG.**

**...NOT ALL
OF THE
PICTURE.**

OH GOD,
NOT AGAIN.
I WANT TO
SCREAM.

MY WHOLE
LIFE IS TAKING
TWO STEPS
FORWARD AND
ONE STEP
BACK.

THUD

MAX?

WILL I
EVER
JUST
GET
AHEAD?

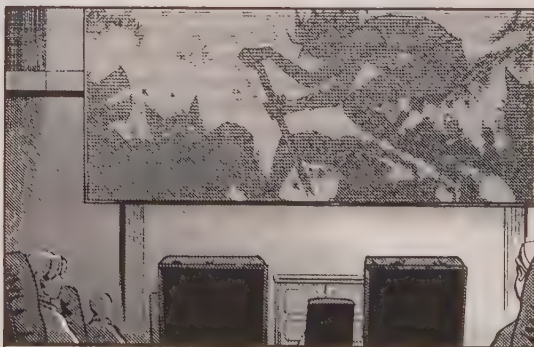
YOU'RE
MAKING
PROGRESS.

YOU'RE A
COUPLE STEPS
AHEAD.

CREAK...

KIDS...

TIME TO GO.



...WOW,
HOW IS
THAT
POSSIBLE...

MURMUR

MURMUR

ARE
THESE
FOR
REAL?

IT'S
REMARK-
ABLE...



FLASH



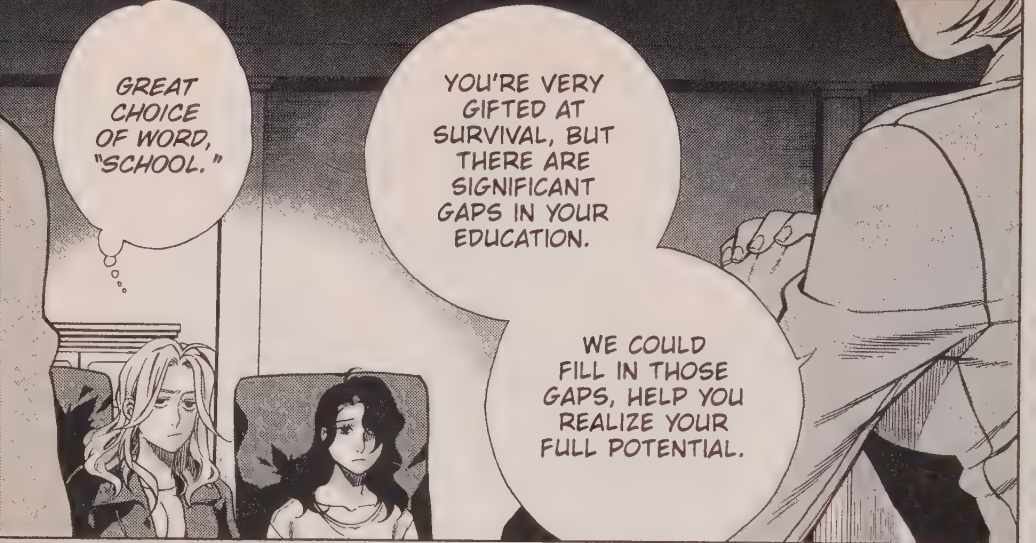
YOU SIX
ARE MOST
IMPRESSIVE.

WE'VE ASKED
YOU TO COME
HERE TODAY
BECAUSE WE'RE
VERY
INTERESTED IN
YOUR FUTURE.

WE, THE
AMERICAN
GOVERNMENT,
DIDN'T KNOW OF
YOUR EXISTENCE
UNTIL QUITE
RECENTLY.

NOW THAT WE
KNOW, WE WANT
TO PROTECT
YOU AND ALSO
EXPLORE
WHETHER WE CAN
BE USEFUL TO
EACH OTHER.

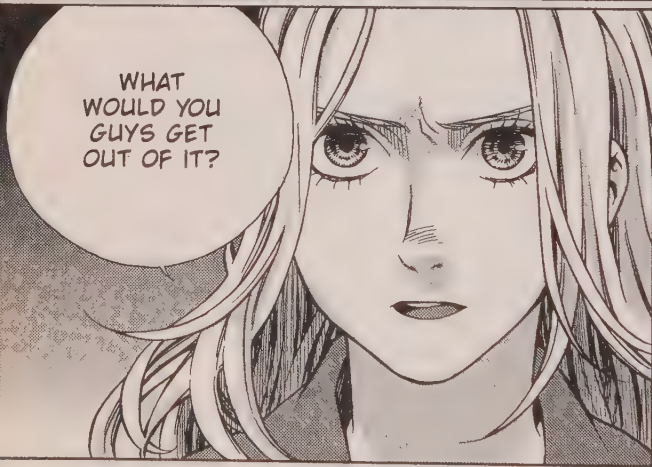
ONE WAY
WE COULD BE
USEFUL TO YOU
WOULD BE FOR
US TO CREATE A
SCHOOL, A PLACE
WHERE YOU COULD
LIVE SAFELY.



GREAT
CHOICE
OF WORD,
"SCHOOL."

YOU'RE VERY
GIFTED AT
SURVIVAL, BUT
THERE ARE
SIGNIFICANT
GAPS IN YOUR
EDUCATION.

WE COULD
FILL IN THOSE
GAPS, HELP YOU
REALIZE YOUR
FULL POTENTIAL.



WHAT
WOULD YOU
GUYS GET
OUT OF IT?

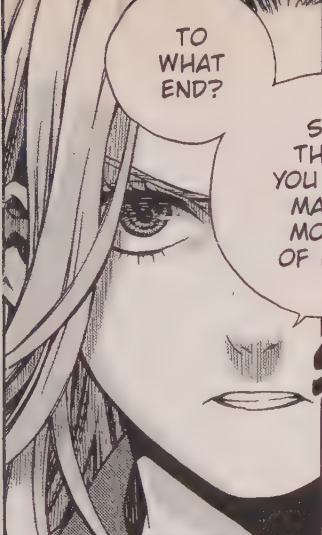


EXCUSE
ME?



WE WOULD
GET TO
STUDY YOU,
FRANKLY.

THE IDEA THAT
HUMAN CHILDREN
CAN ACTUALLY FLY
IS MIND-BLOWING.
WE WOULD STUDY
YOU, UNDERSTAND
THE PHYSICAL
CHANGES THAT
ENABLE YOU TO
FLY.



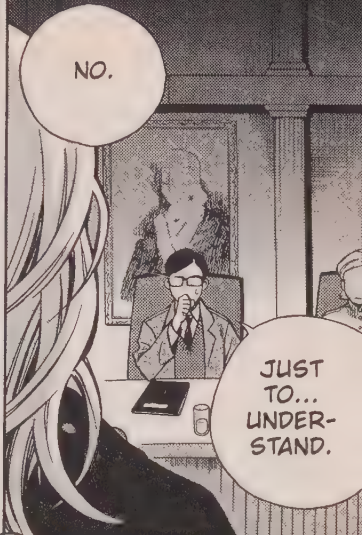
TO
WHAT
END?

SO
THAT
YOU CAN
MAKE
MORE
OF US?

SHUDDER

AH...

NO.

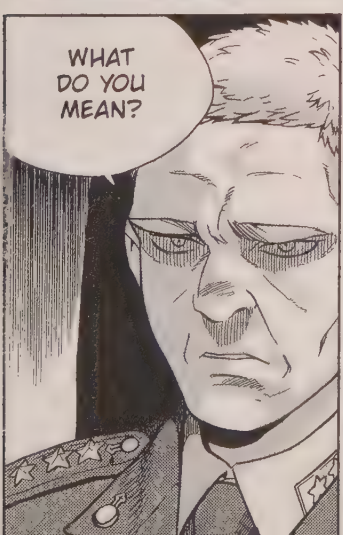


JUST
TO...
UNDER-
STAND.

OKAY,
SAY YOU
GET TO
STUDY US.

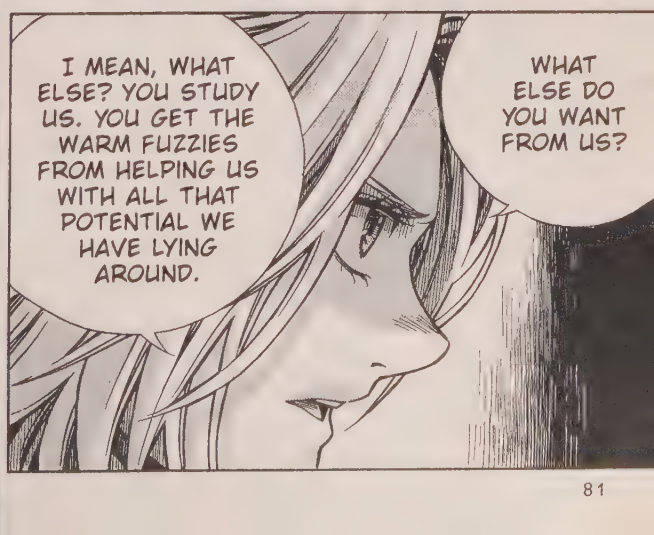
SOMEHOW
YOU GET US TO
BELIEVE THAT IT
WOULDN'T BE A
COMPLETE NIGHTMARE
FOR US TO BE HOOKED
UP TO SENSORS
WHILE WE RUN ON
TREADMILLS...

...OR TO HOLD
OUR OWN IN
WIND TUNNELS
WHILE YOU FILM
US FLYING.
THEN WHAT?

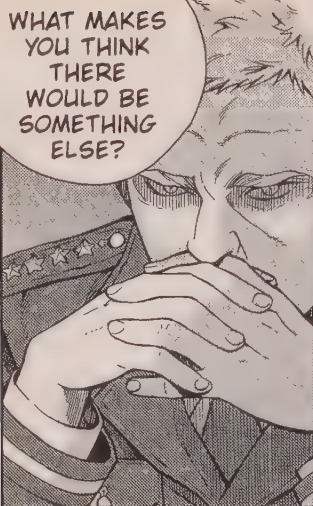


WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

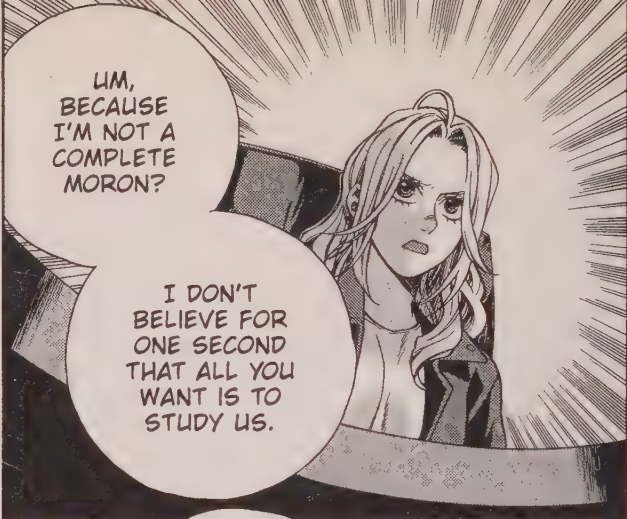
I MEAN, WHAT
ELSE? YOU STUDY
US. YOU GET THE
WARM FUZZIES
FROM HELPING US
WITH ALL THAT
POTENTIAL WE
HAVE LYING
AROUND.



WHAT
ELSE DO
YOU WANT
FROM US?

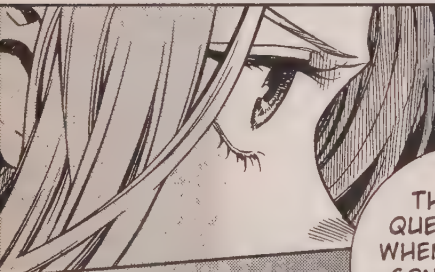


WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK
THERE
WOULD BE
SOMETHING
ELSE?



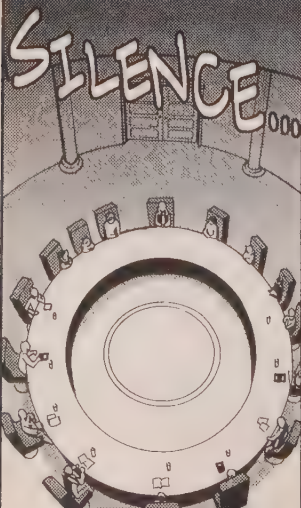
UM,
BECAUSE
I'M NOT A
COMPLETE
MORON?

I DON'T
BELIEVE FOR
ONE SECOND
THAT ALL YOU
WANT IS TO
STUDY US.



YOU KNOW
AND I KNOW
THAT YOU'VE GOT
ULTERIOR MOTIVES
UP THAT CRISPLY
STARCHED
SLEEVE.

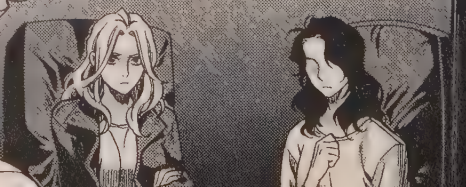
THE ONLY
QUESTION IS,
WHEN ARE YOU
GONNA SHOW
US WHAT
THEY ARE?



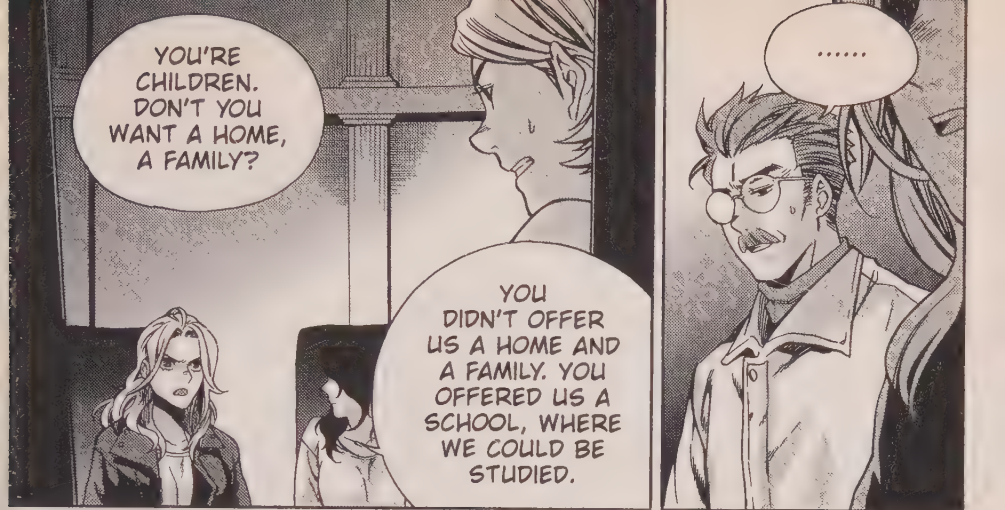
SILENCE



WHY
WOULDN'T
YOU WANT
OUR PRO-
TECTION?



BECAUSE
IT COMES
WITH A
PRICE, WITH
STRINGS.



YOU'RE CHILDREN.
DON'T YOU WANT A HOME,
A FAMILY?

YOU
DIDN'T OFFER
US A HOME AND
A FAMILY. YOU
OFFERED US A
SCHOOL, WHERE
WE COULD BE
STUDIED.

YOU ARE
MINORS, AND AS
SUCH MUST BE
UNDER ADULT
SUPERVISION AND
GUARDIANSHIP,
ACCORDING TO
STATE LAW.

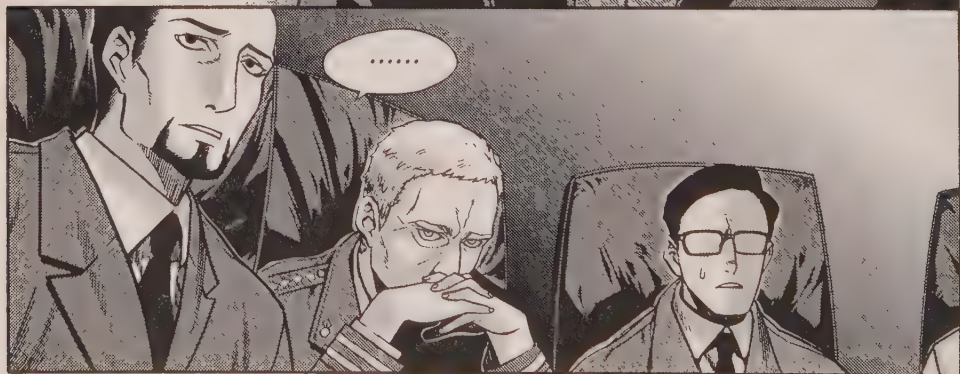
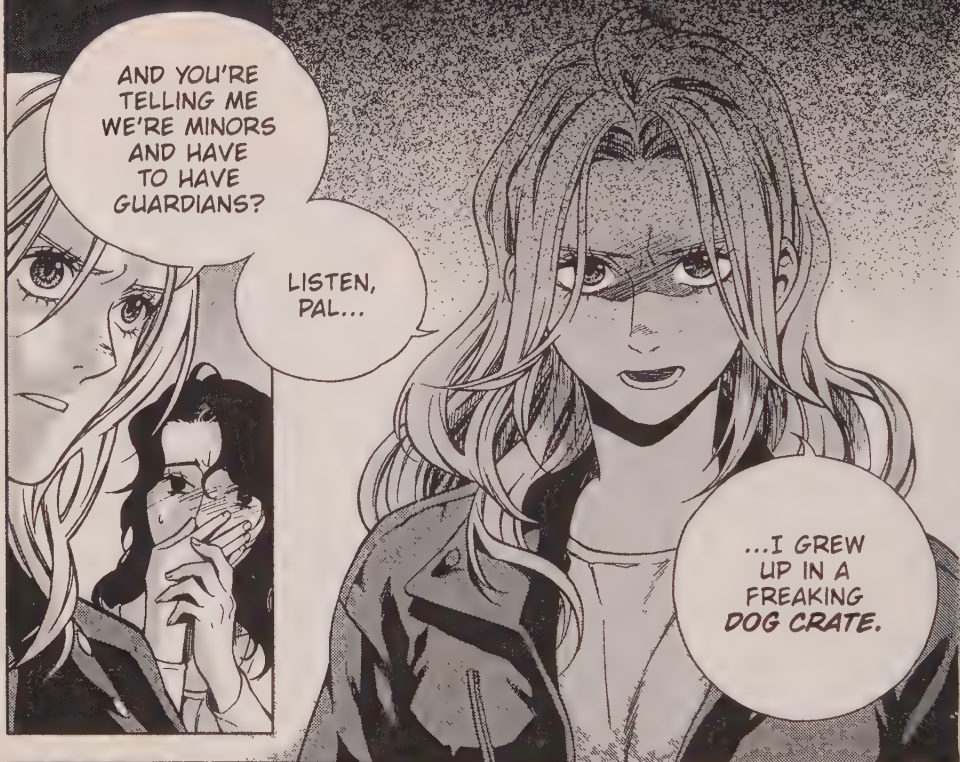
WE'RE
OFFERING
YOU SUCH
GUARDIANSHIP
WITH A GREAT
MANY BENEFITS
AND
PRIVILEGES.

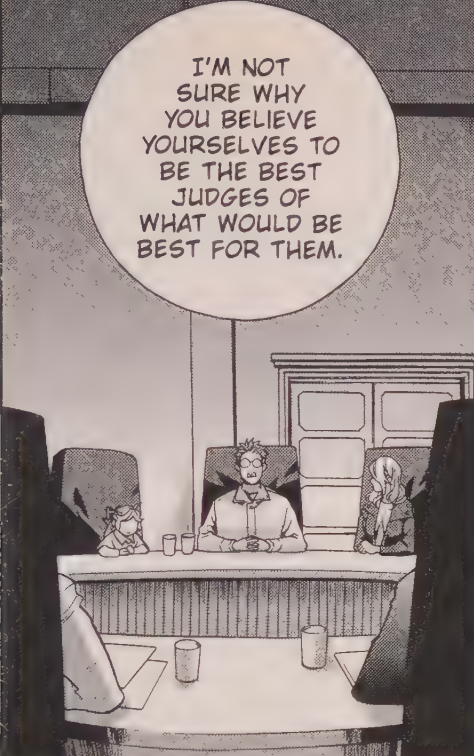
WE'VE
ESCAPED
FROM TOP-
SECURITY
PRISONS...

...LIVED
THROUGH
MENTAL AND
PHYSICAL
TORTURE, LIVED
ON OUR OWN
FOR YEARS...

...MADE TONS
OF SMARTY-
PANTS GROWN-
UPS LOOK LIKE
FOOLS WITHOUT
EVEN TRYING...

...EATEN
DESERT
RATS
WITH NO
A.I. STEAK
SAUCE.





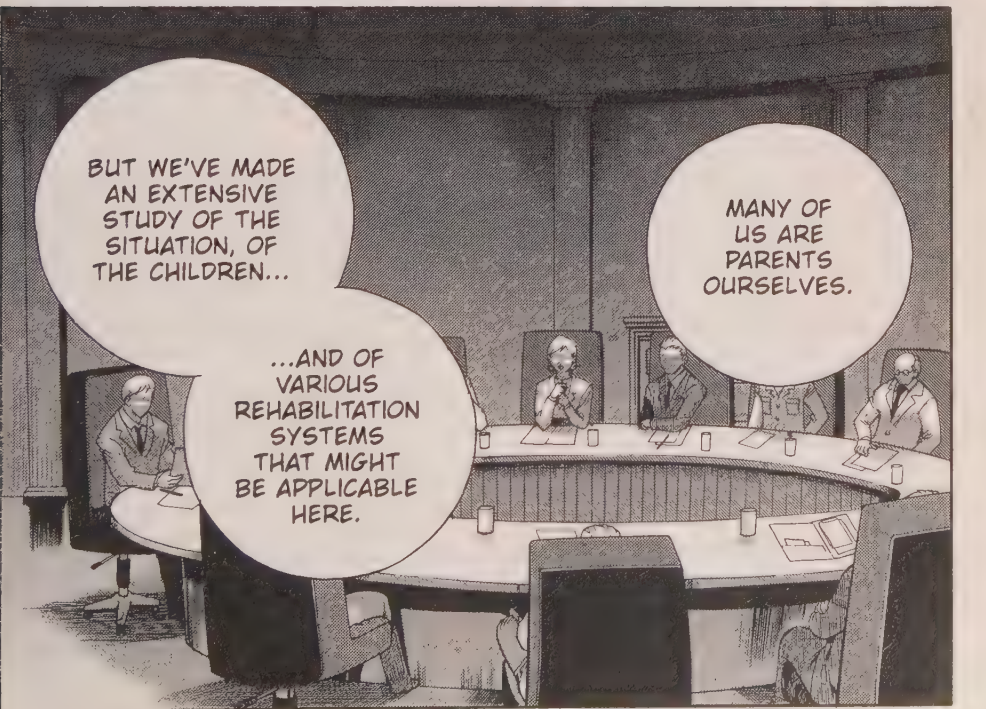
I'M NOT
SURE WHY
YOU BELIEVE
YOURSELVES TO
BE THE BEST
JUDGES OF
WHAT WOULD BE
BEST FOR THEM.



NONE OF US
HAVE BEEN
ASSOCIATED,
HOWEVER
PERIPHERALLY,
WITH ITEX OR
ITS VARIOUS
RESEARCH
BRANCHES.



.....



BUT WE'VE MADE
AN EXTENSIVE
STUDY OF THE
SITUATION, OF
THE CHILDREN...

...AND OF
VARIOUS
REHABILITATION
SYSTEMS
THAT MIGHT
BE APPLICABLE
HERE.

MANY OF
US ARE
PARENTS
OURSELVES.

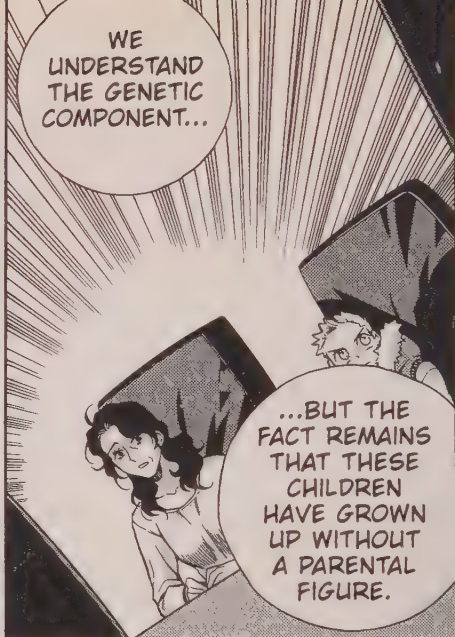
**BUT
YOU'RE
NOT THEIR
PARENTS!**



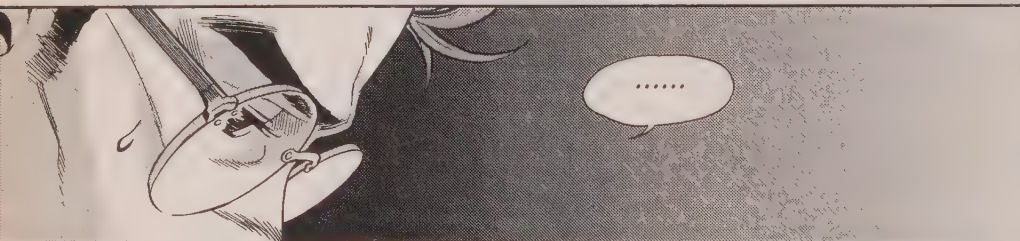
**WE
UNDERSTAND
THE GENETIC
COMPONENT...**



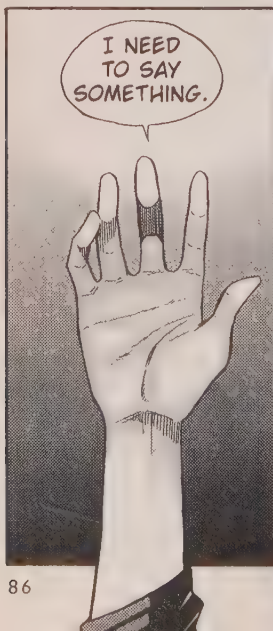
**WITH ALL
DUE RESPECT,
DR. MARTINEZ,
NEITHER ARE
YOU, NOR
IS JEB
BATCHELDER.**



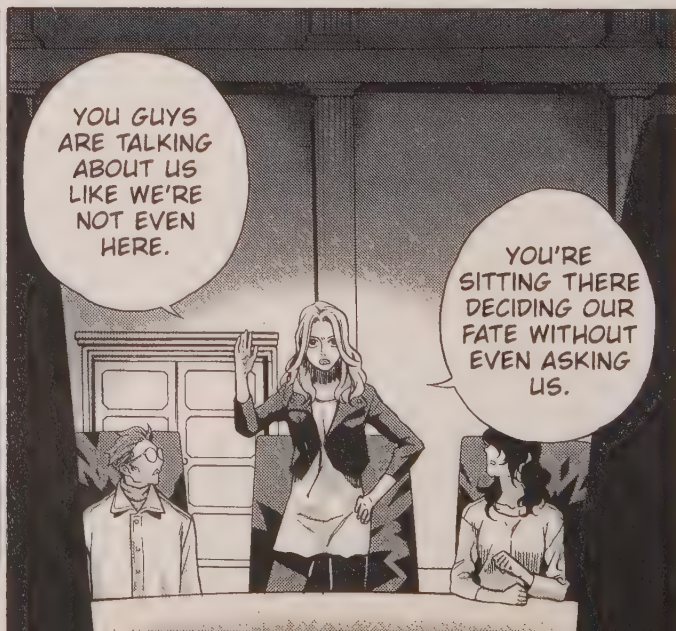
**...BUT THE
FACT REMAINS
THAT THESE
CHILDREN
HAVE GROWN
UP WITHOUT
A PARENTAL
FIGURE.**



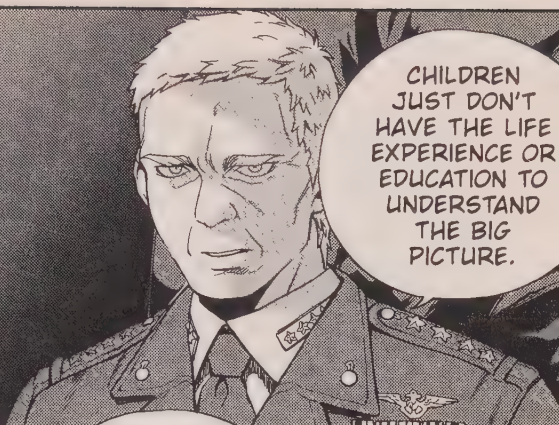
**I NEED
TO SAY
SOMETHING.**



**YOU GUYS
ARE TALKING
ABOUT US
LIKE WE'RE
NOT EVEN
HERE.**



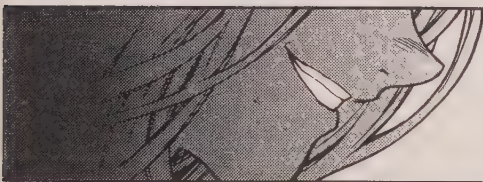
**YOU'RE
SITTING THERE
DECIDING OUR
FATE WITHOUT
EVEN ASKING
US.**



MAXIMUM,
WHILE CHILDREN
ARE OFTEN
ENCOURAGED
TO EXPRESS A
PREFERENCE...

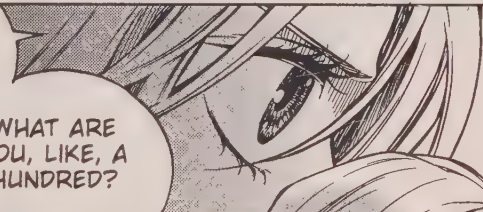
...TYPICALLY,
RESPONSIBLE
ADULTS
DETERMINE
WHAT'S BEST
FOR THEM.

CHILDREN
JUST DON'T
HAVE THE LIFE
EXPERIENCE OR
EDUCATION TO
UNDERSTAND
THE BIG
PICTURE.



LIFE
EXPERIENCE?

BIG
PICTURE?

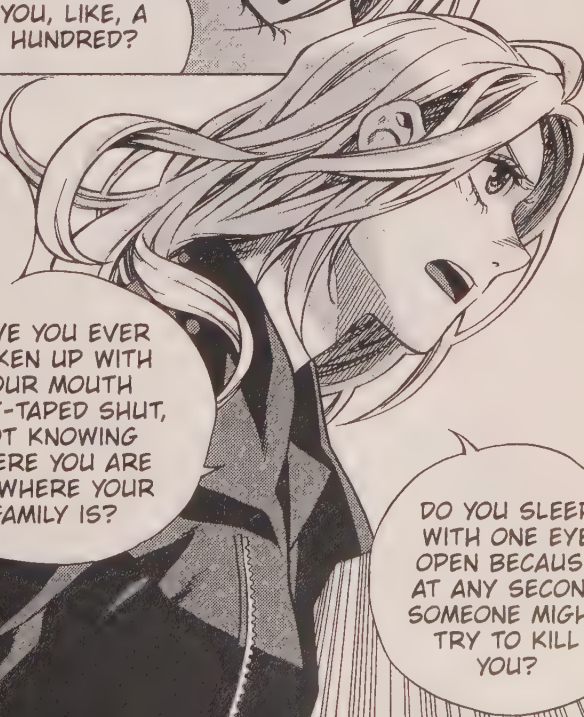


I'VE HAD MORE
LIFE EXPERIENCE
IN FOURTEEN
YEARS THAN
YOU'VE HAD
IN—

WHAT ARE
YOU, LIKE, A
HUNDRED?

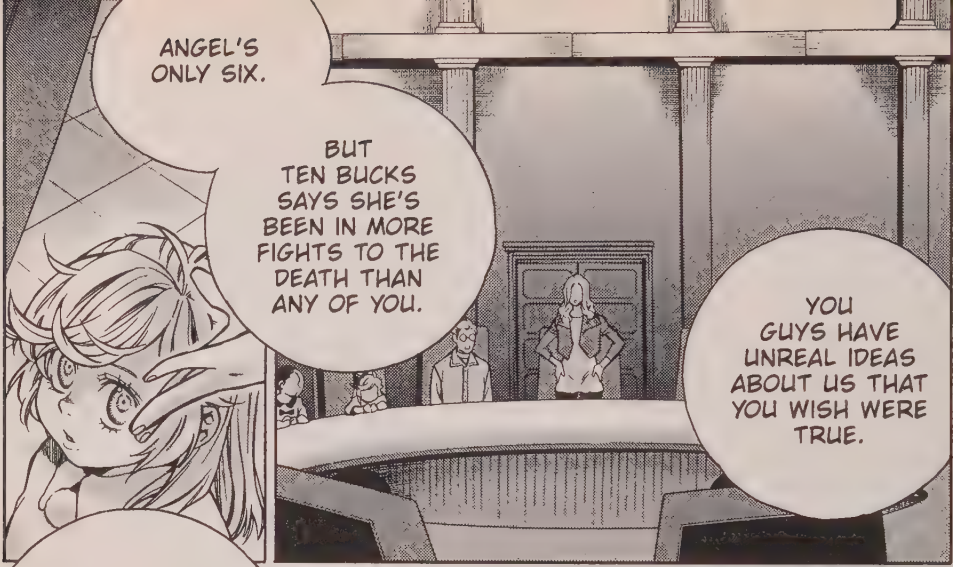


YOU'RE THE
ONES WHO
DON'T HAVE
THE LIFE
EXPERIENCE.



HAVE YOU EVER
WOKEN UP WITH
YOUR MOUTH
DUCT-TAPED SHUT,
NOT KNOWING
WHERE YOU ARE
OR WHERE YOUR
FAMILY IS?

DO YOU SLEEP
WITH ONE EYE
OPEN BECAUSE
AT ANY SECOND
SOMEONE MIGHT
TRY TO KILL
YOU?



ANGEL'S
ONLY SIX.

BUT
TEN BUCKS
SAYS SHE'S
BEEN IN MORE
FIGHTS TO THE
DEATH THAN
ANY OF YOU.

YOU
GUYS HAVE
UNREAL IDEAS
ABOUT US THAT
YOU WISH WERE
TRUE.

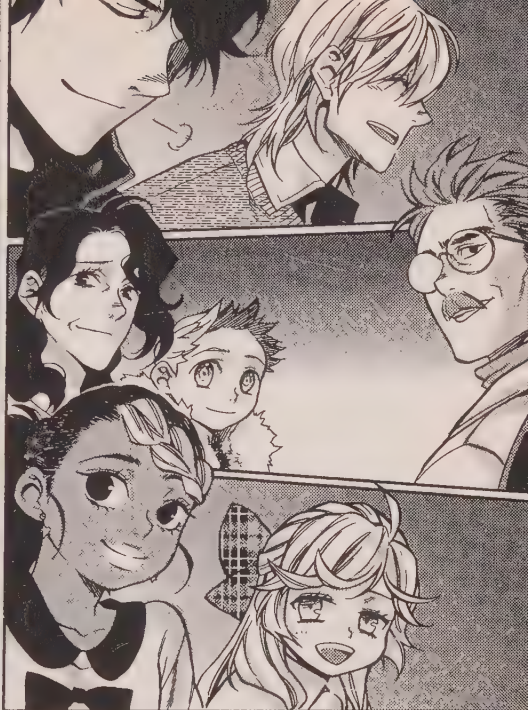


THE KIDS YOU
DESIGNED THIS
SCHOOL FOR
ARE PROBABLY
CLEAN, POLITE,
GRATEFUL,
AGREEABLE.

SADLY,
THAT ISN'T
US.



WE DON'T
NEED TO BE
"REHABILITATED."





BENEATH A CERTAIN COUNTRY
IN MIDDLE EUROPE



KH-SHEE

SINCE THOSE
FOOLS KEEP
PRODUCING
NUCLEAR
POWER...

...WITHOUT
HAVING THE
SLIGHTEST IDEA
OF WHAT TO DO
WITH ITS TOXIC
BY-PRODUCTS...

TMP
TMP

WH
R
L



...THIS
ENORMOUS NET-
WORK OF CAVES
AND TUNNELS
WILL BE TURNED
INTO AN IMPER-
MEABLE STORAGE
CENTER FOR
RADIOACTIVE
WASTE.

HAVE ALL
THE PARTIES
ACCEPTED
THE INVITATION TO
ATTEND?

ZIIING...

YES, SIR.
EVERYTHING
IS PREPARED.

GOOD.

KH-SHEE

KH-SHEE

THEN LET'S
BEGIN.

04

02

01

03

Greetings. To clarify what we're doing here today, let me go over some salient points.

KH-SHEE
KH-SHEE

FLASH!

BEEP

You are looking at six juvenile avian-human experiments in recombinant-DNA science.

They are the most viable of any that have been produced.

They can actually fly like birds.

They have an uncanny sense of direction and superior regenerative and healing powers.

KH-SHEE

KH-SHEE

FLICK



They're smart, wily, and relatively sturdy.

No.
Not at all.
To me they are genetic accidents, mistakes.



KH-SHEE

YOU SOUND AS IF YOU ADMIRE THEM.

...HA...

Admire?

Nor am I so foolish as to underestimate them...

...as my predecessors have.

MURMUR
MURMUR

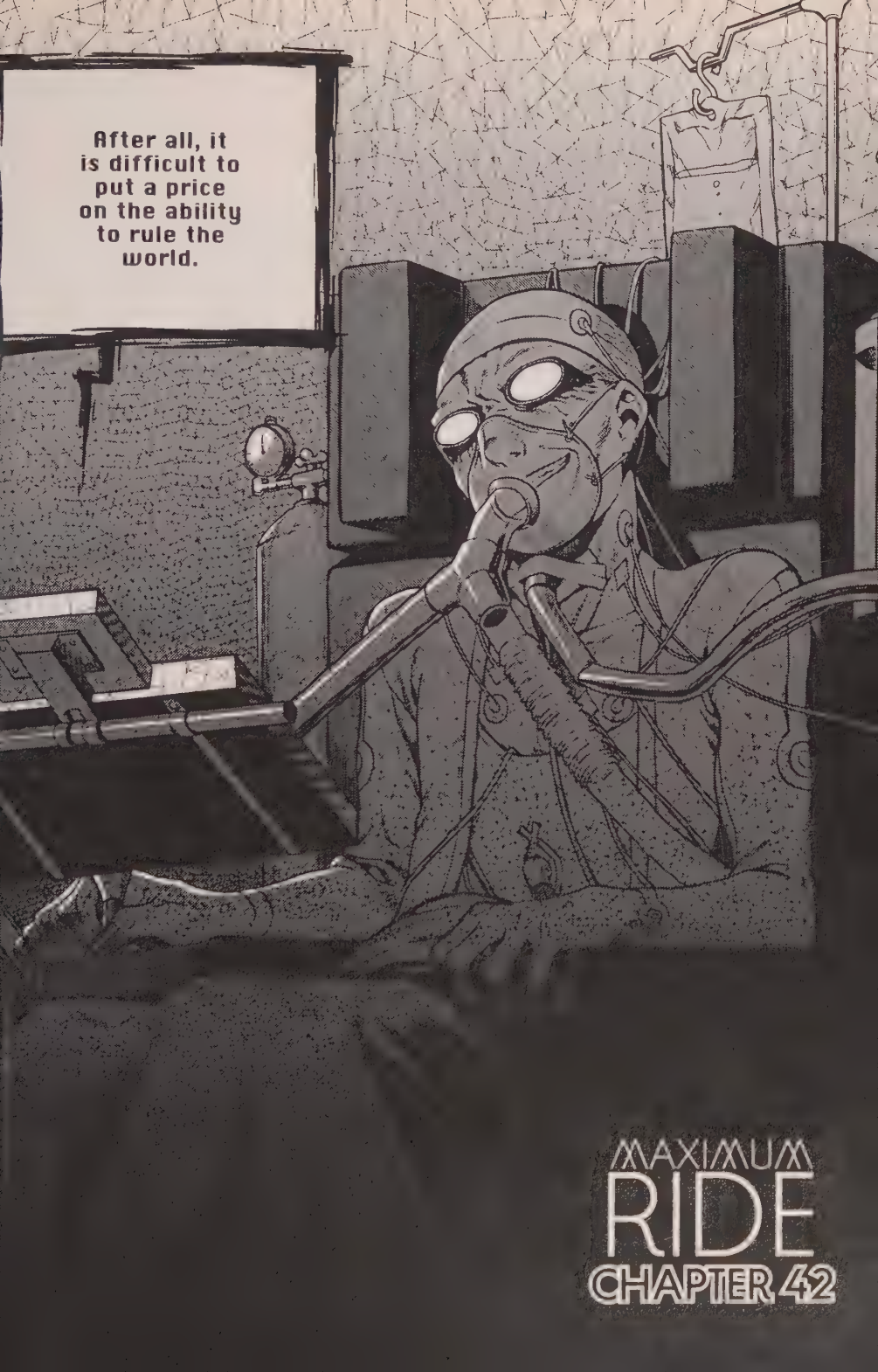
You have received your packets of information.

I will answer no more questions. I will alert you as to when and where the bidding will take place.

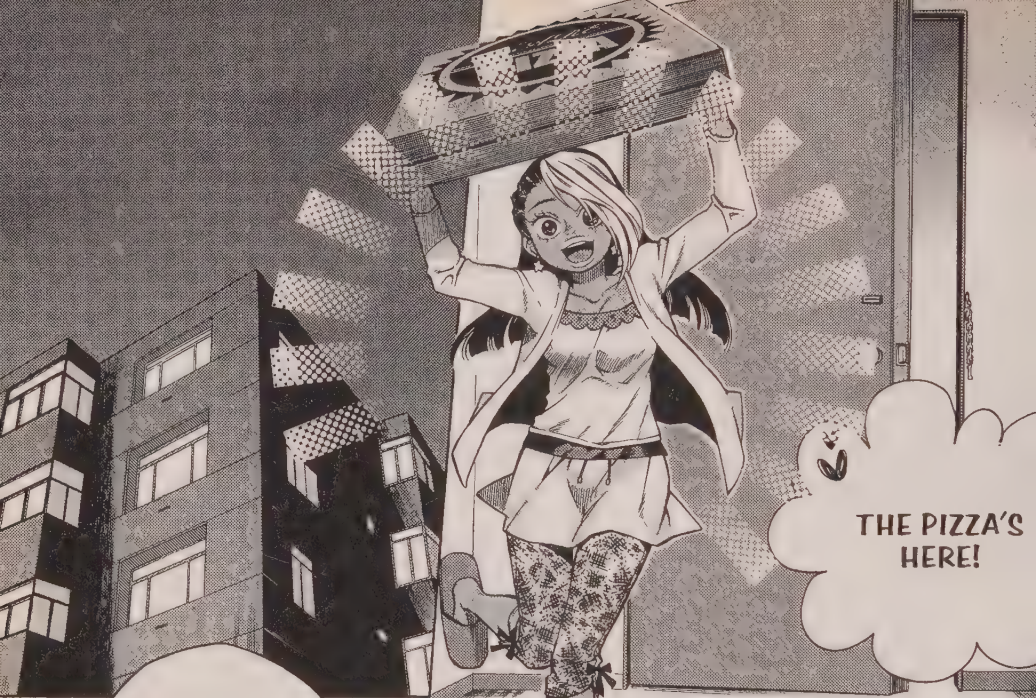
Please be aware that the opening bid is five hundred million dollars.



After all, it
is difficult to
put a price
on the ability
to rule the
world.



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 42



THE PIZZA'S
HERE!

I JUST
THOUGHT IT
WOULD BE
GREAT IF YOU
WERE BEING
PROTECTED
SOMEHOW.

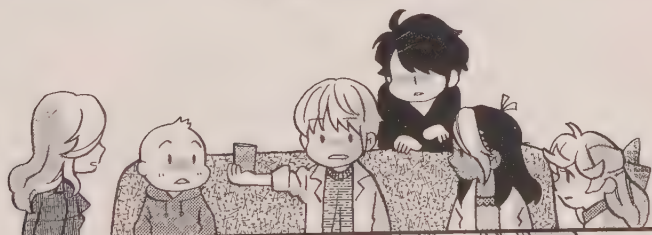
BUT THEY
SEEMED SO
ARROGANT. I
REALLY
DON'T THINK
THEY HAD A
GOOD PLAN
FOR YOU
GUYS.

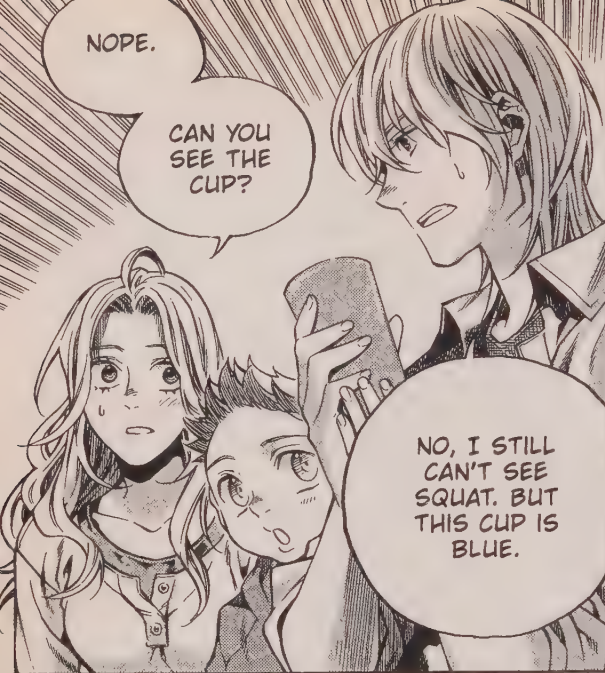
I'M SORRY,
MAX.

WHY ARE
YOU SORRY?
IT WAS OUR
DECISION TO
COME HERE
ANYWAY.



HUH.....?

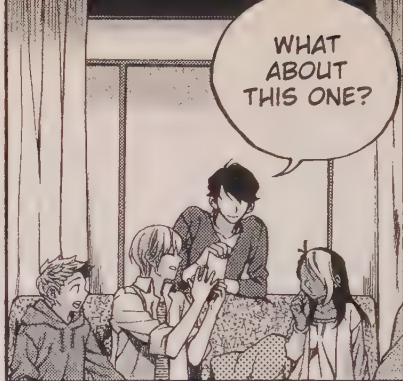




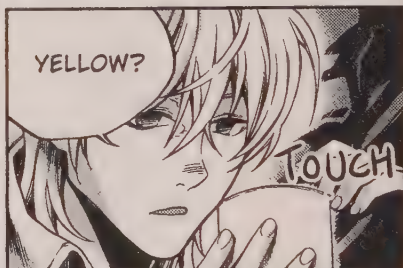
NOPE.

CAN YOU
SEE THE
CUP?

NO, I STILL
CAN'T SEE
SQUAT. BUT
THIS CUP IS
BLUE.

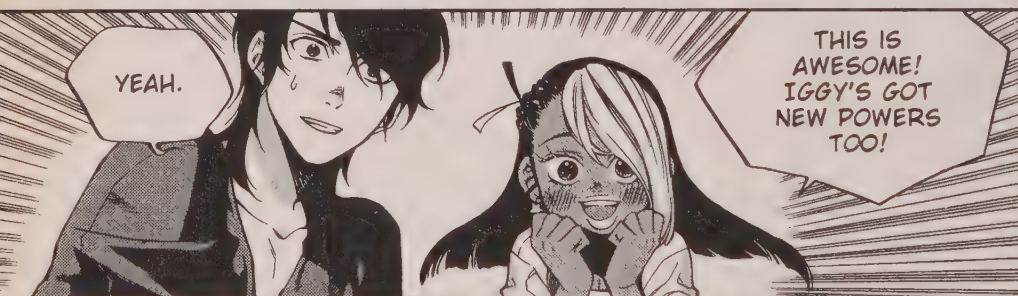


WHAT
ABOUT
THIS ONE?



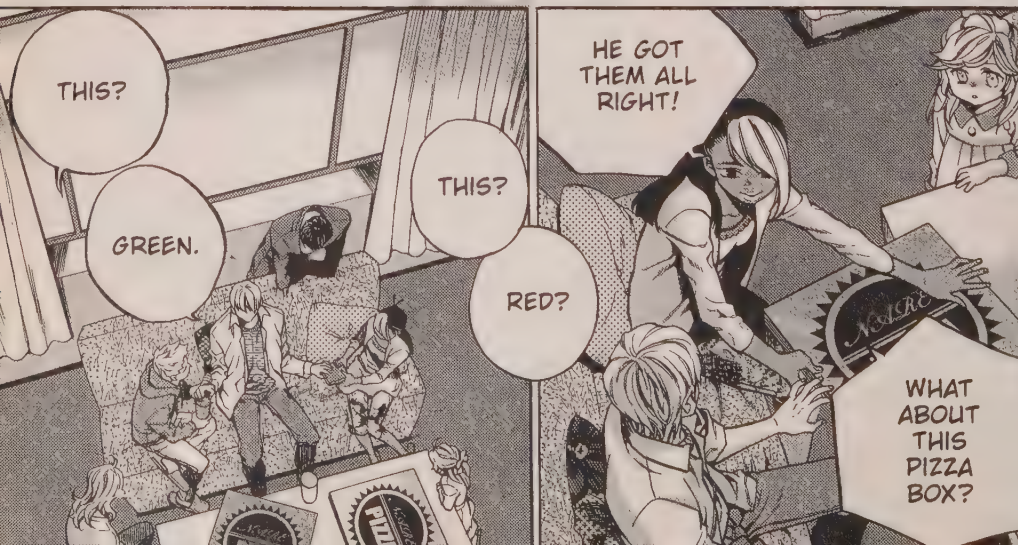
YELLOW?

TOUCH



YEAH.

THIS IS
AWESOME!
IGGY'S GOT
NEW POWERS
TOO!



THIS?

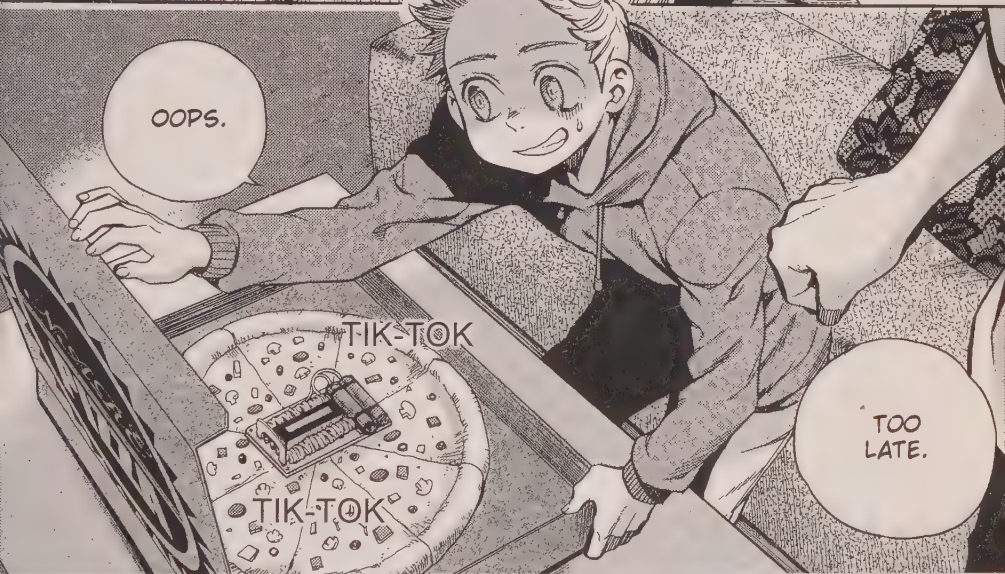
GREEN.

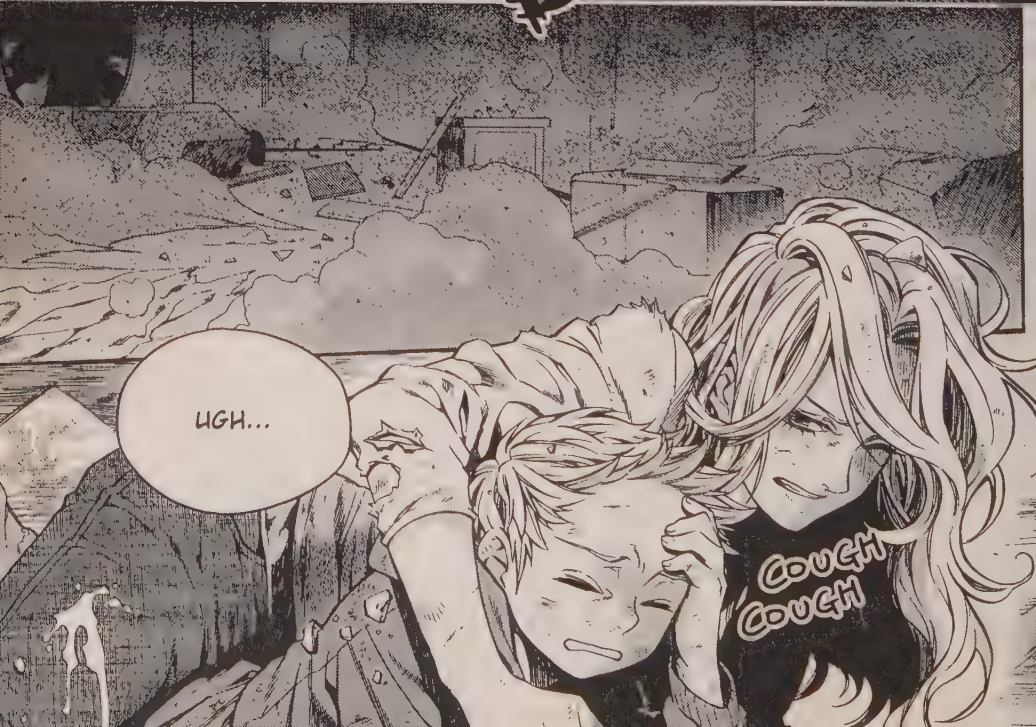
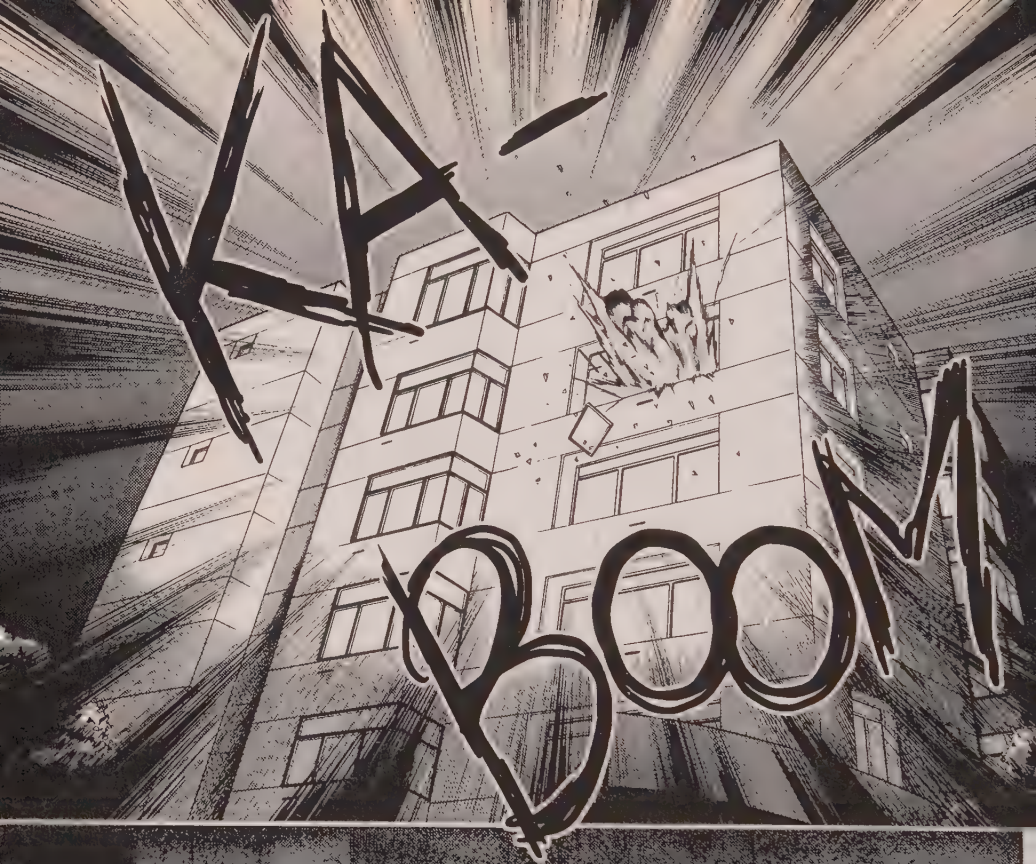
THIS?

RED?

HE GOT
THEM ALL
RIGHT!

WHAT
ABOUT
THIS
PIZZA
BOX?





REPORT!

I'M
OKAY...

ME
TOO...

OKAY
HERE.

ARE YOU
OKAY?

→COUGH→
YEAH.
WHAT WAS
THAT?

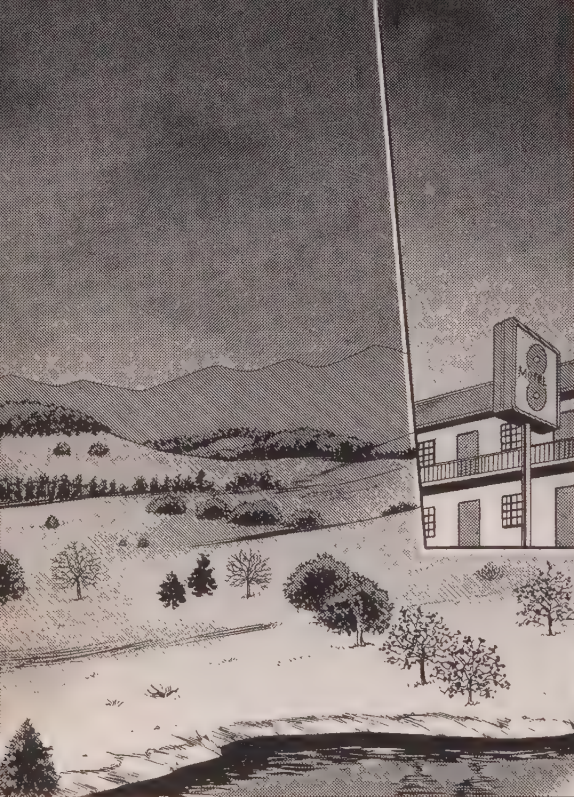
WHEE - WOO

WHEE - WOO

LET'S SCRAM
BEFORE THE
COPS SHOW.

What's
going on?

AIEEE!!



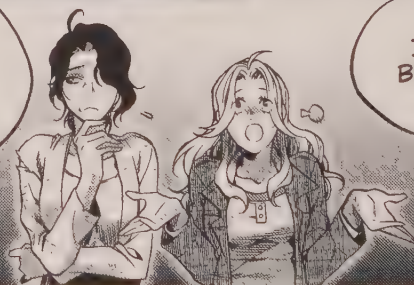
MAX!

THIS IS GREAT,
REALLY IN THE
MIDDLE OF
NOWHERE.

LET'S GO IN
AND CLEAN
UP.



BUT WHO
COULD HAVE
DONE SUCH
A THING?



IT COULD
BE ANYONE.

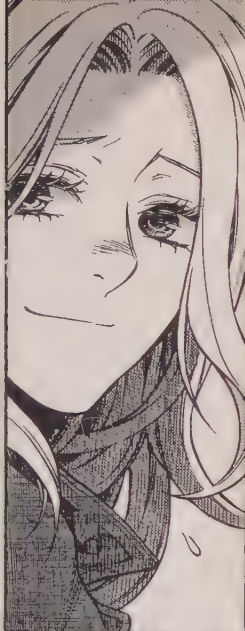
WE'RE TOO
USED TO
IT BY NOW
ANYWAY.



MAX.

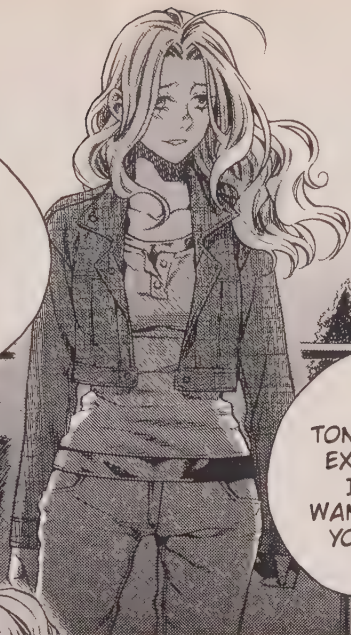


LET'S GO
BACK HOME
TOMORROW.



I
WOULDN'T
DO THAT
TO YOU.

AT LEAST
NOT TOO
OFTEN.
ANYONE WHO
HELPS US
WINDS UP
GETTING
HURT.



LIKE
TONIGHT, FOR
EXAMPLE...
I DON'T
WANT TO GET
YOU HURT.

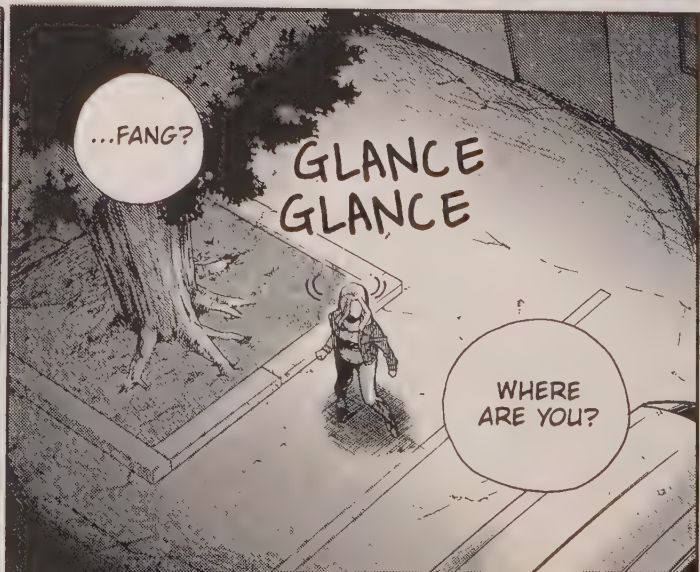
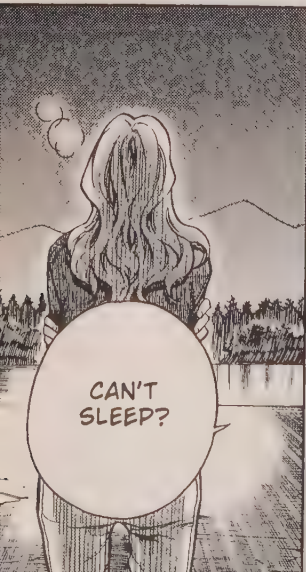
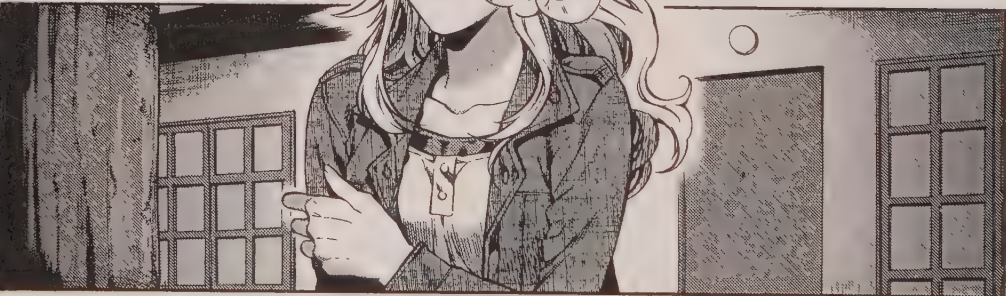
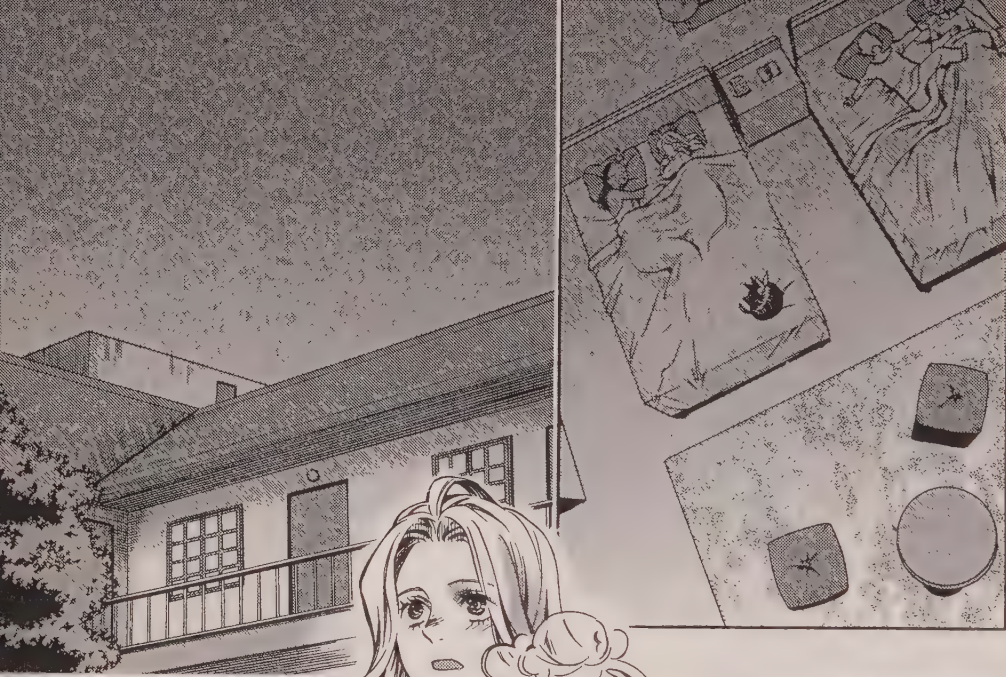


HUG..



STILL.
NEVER
FORGET
YOU HAVE
A REFUGE.

...MOM...



HERE.

GRAB

SSK

BEHIND
THE
TREE?

ARE YOU
BLIND?

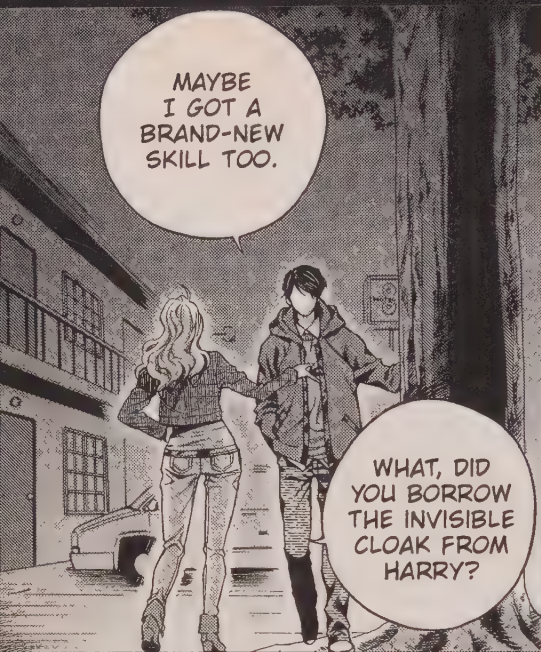
EMPTY

WHERE
WERE
YOU?

I WAS
RIGHT
HERE THE
WHOLE
TIME.

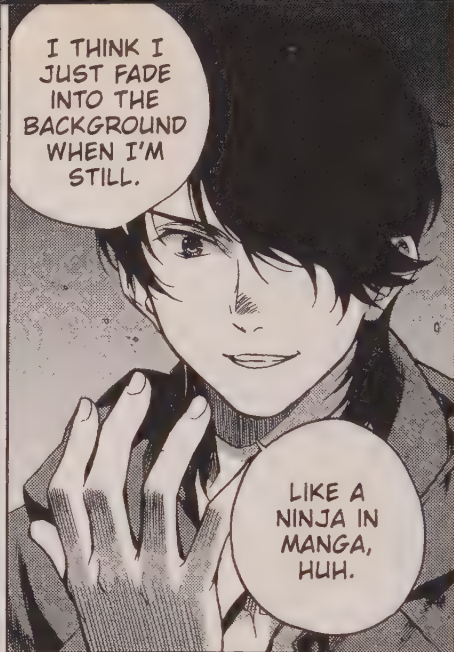
I
LOOKED—
YOU
WEREN'T
THERE.

HMM.



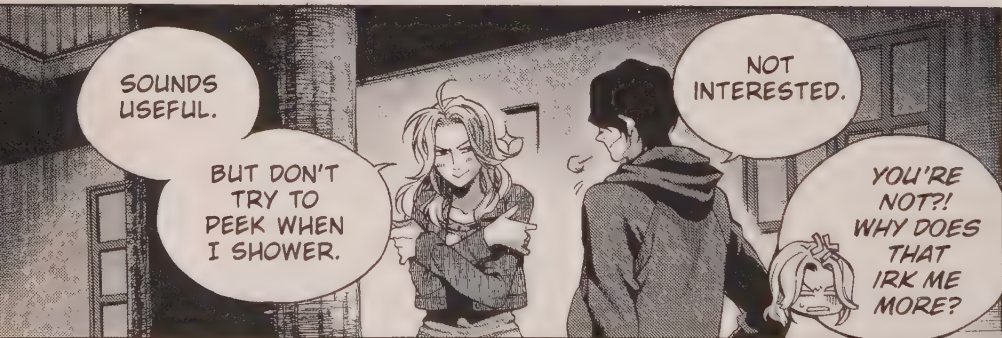
MAYBE
I GOT A
BRAND-NEW
SKILL TOO.

WHAT, DID
YOU BORROW
THE INVISIBLE
CLOAK FROM
HARRY?



I THINK I
JUST FADE
INTO THE
BACKGROUND
WHEN I'M
STILL.

LIKE A
NINJA IN
MANGA,
HUH.

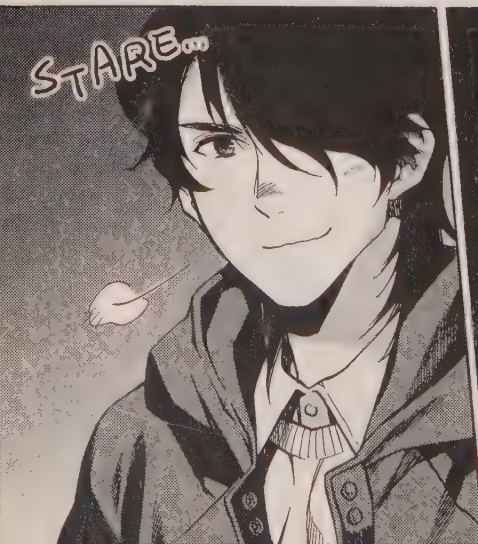


SOUNDS
USEFUL.

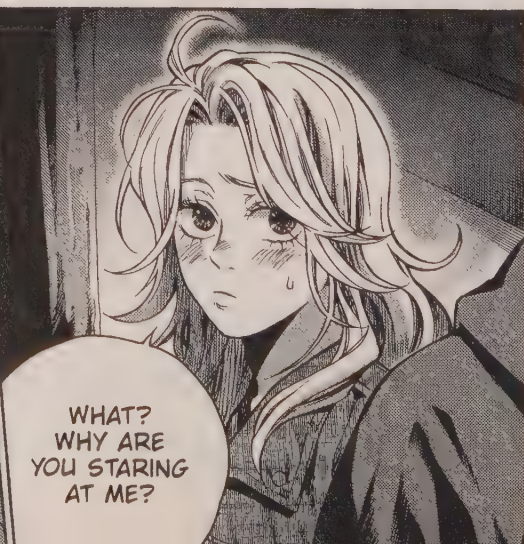
BUT DON'T
TRY TO
PEEK WHEN
I SHOWER.

NOT
INTERESTED.

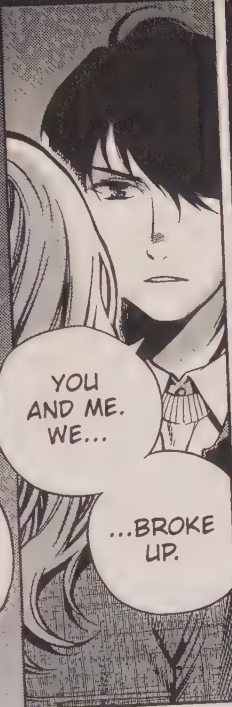
YOU'RE
NOT?!
WHY DOES
THAT
IRK ME
MORE?



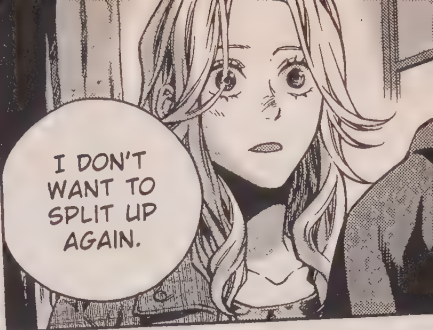
STARE



WHAT?
WHY ARE
YOU STARING
AT ME?



FEELS LIKE
WE'RE BACK
ON TRACK.

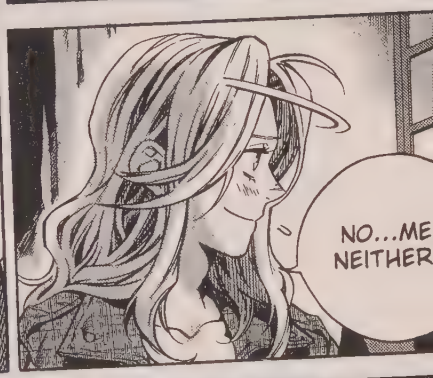


I DON'T
WANT TO
SPLIT UP
AGAIN.

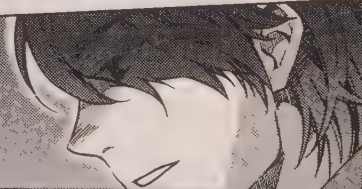
YOU
AND ME.
WE...

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN?
WHAT
TRACK?

...BROKE
UP.



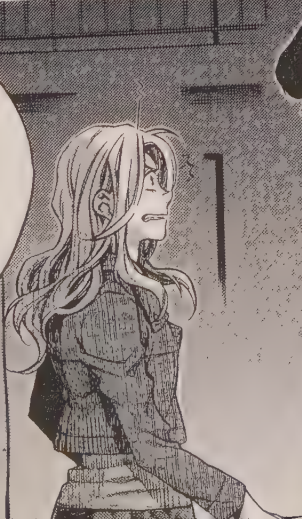
NO...ME
NEITHER



MAX...



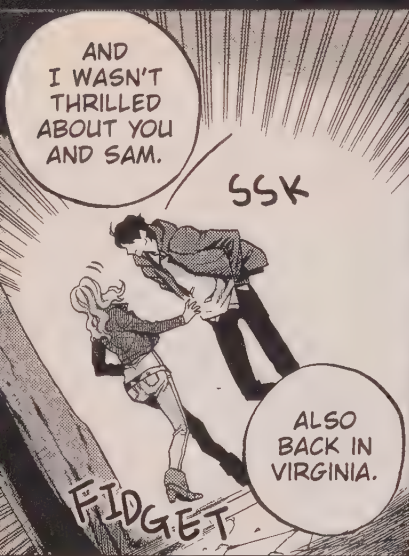
YEAH?



YOU DIDN'T
LIKE IT WHEN
YOU SAW
ME WITH
THAT GIRL
AT SCHOOL,
BACK IN
VIRGINIA.



WHY
ARE YOU
SUDDENLY
BRINGING
THAT UP?!

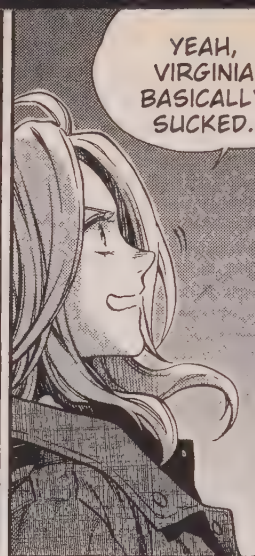


AND
I WASN'T
THRILLED
ABOUT YOU
AND SAM.

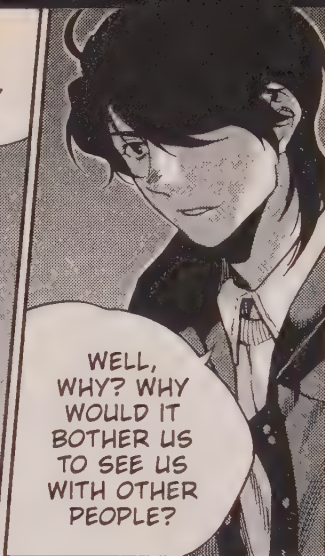
SSK

ALSO
BACK IN
VIRGINIA.

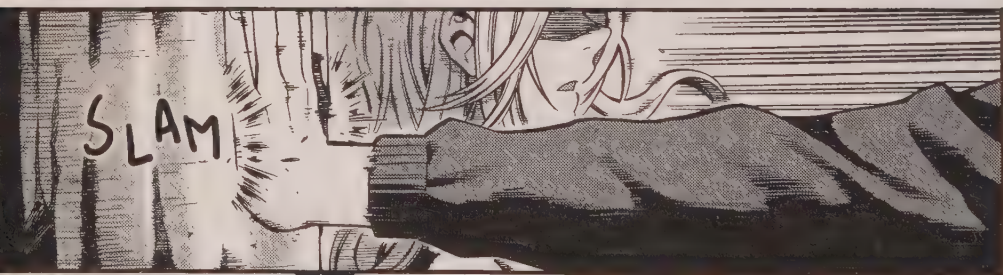
FIDGET



YEAH,
VIRGINIA
BASICALLY
SUCKED.



WELL,
WHY? WHY
WOULD IT
BOTHER US
TO SEE US
WITH OTHER
PEOPLE?



SLAM



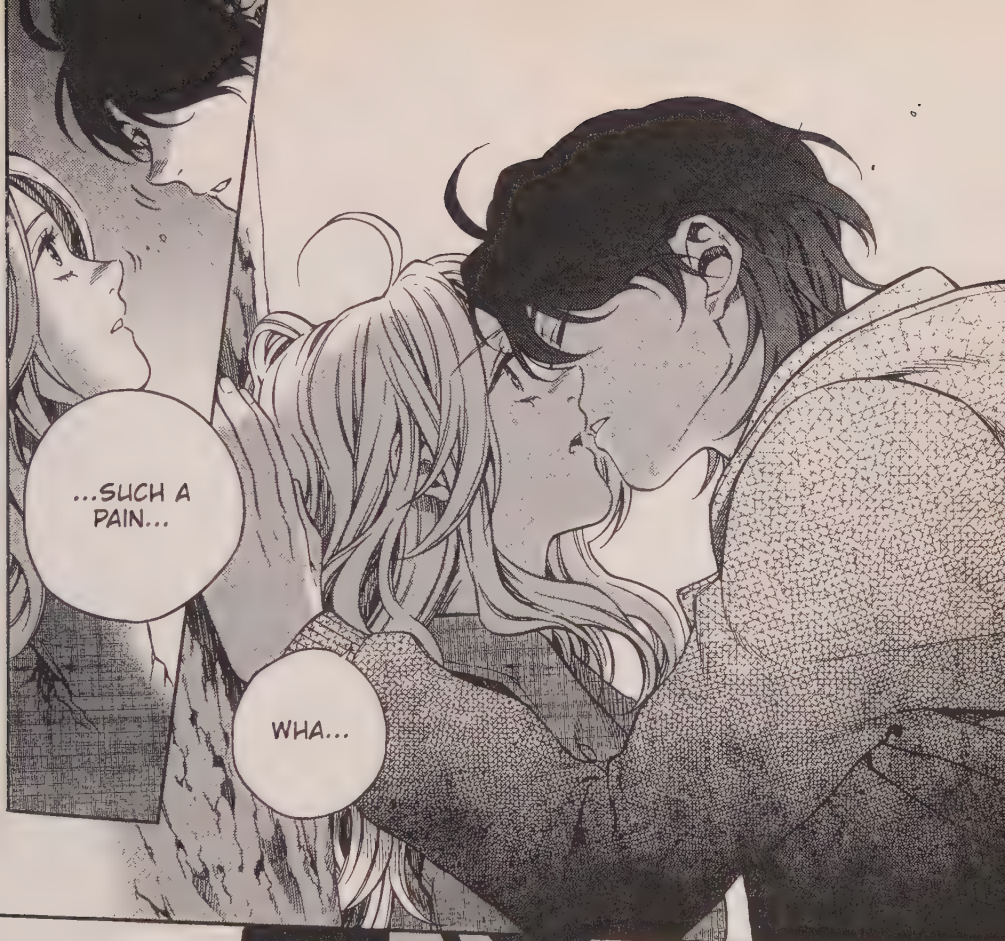
'COS WE'RE
SHALLOW
AND SELF-
SERVING?

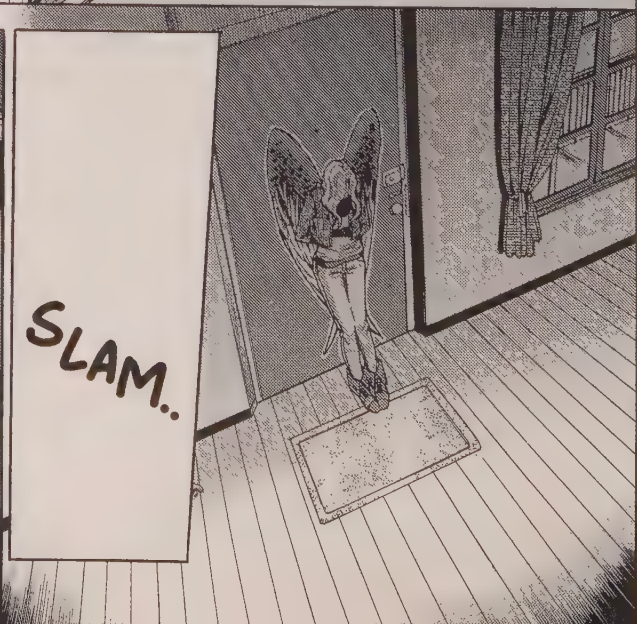
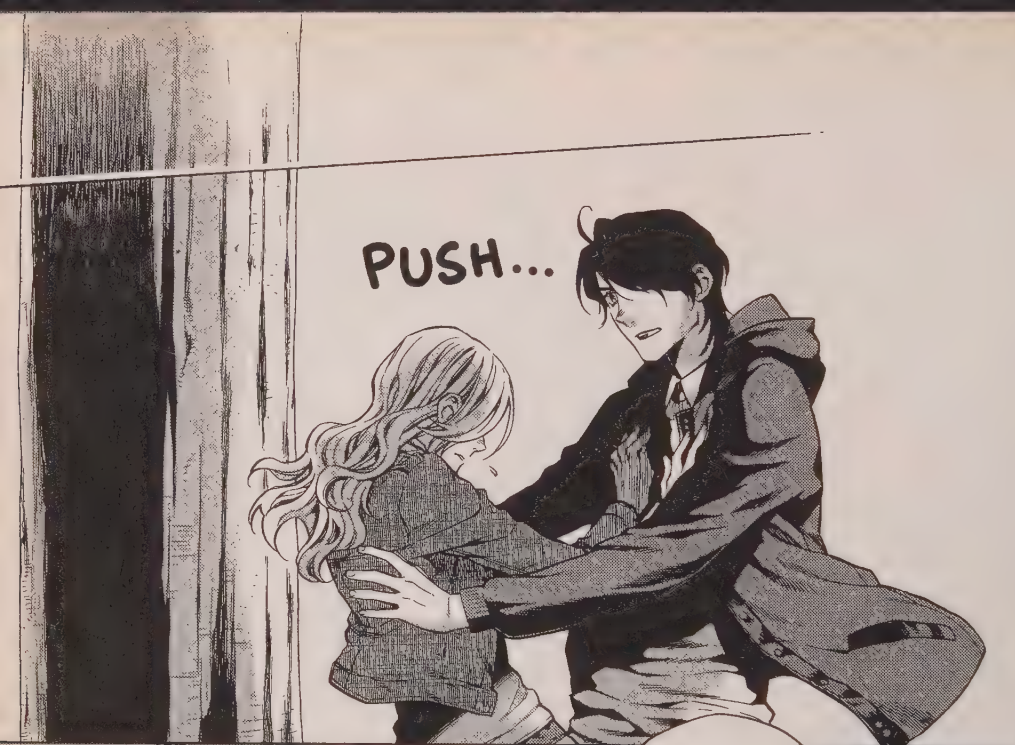


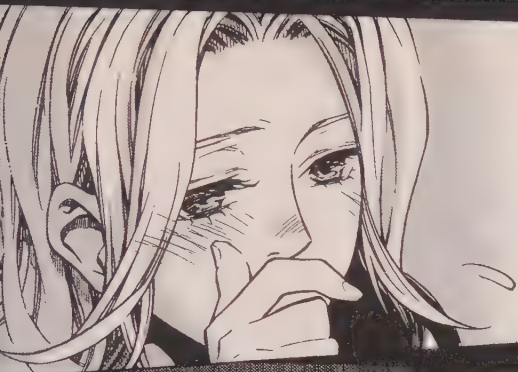
MAX...

YOU'RE...

BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP





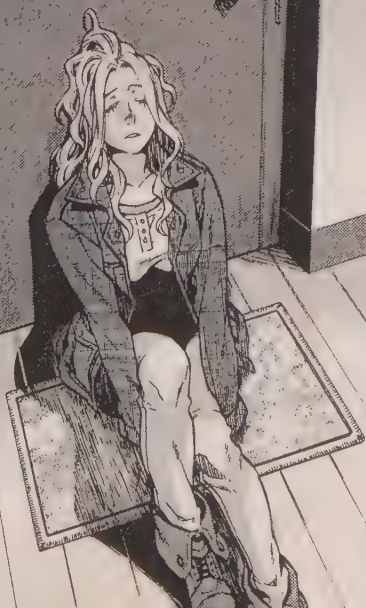


THIS IS
FANG, FANG
AND ME,
AND...

...THAT WAS
INCREDIBLE.

I LOVED IT.

I LOVE HIM.



THE NEXT DAY

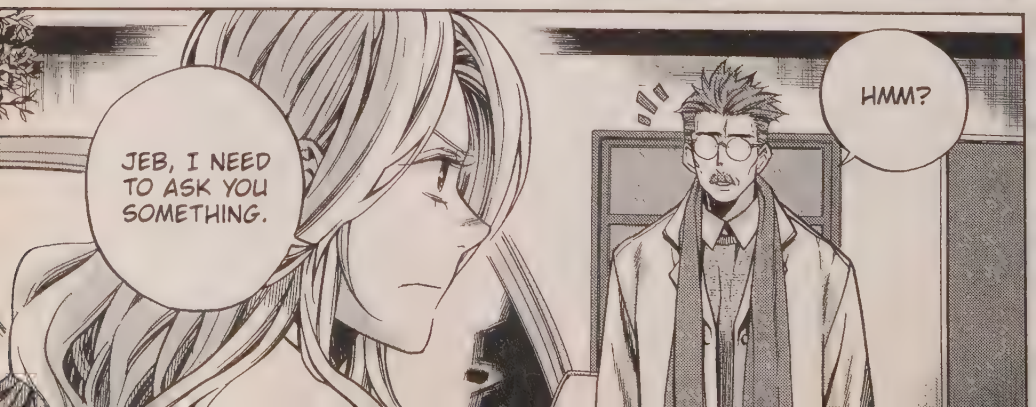


DO YOU
HAVE TO
GO?

YEAH,
STAYING IN
ONE PLACE
FOR TOO
LONG IS
DANGEROUS.

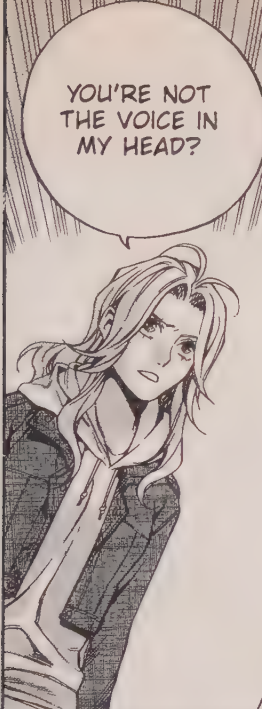
BUT...

I'LL CALL
OFTEN.
DON'T
WORRY.



JEB, I NEED
TO ASK YOU
SOMETHING.

HMM?

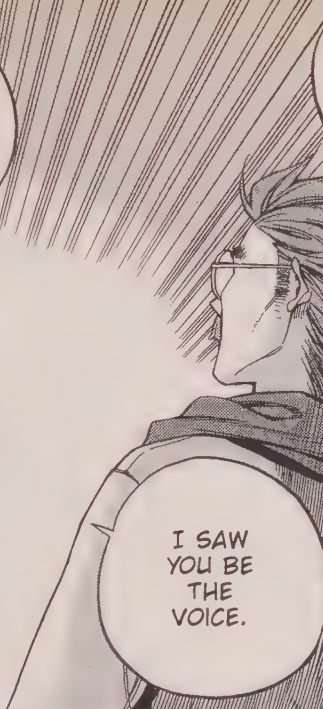


YOU'RE NOT
THE VOICE IN
MY HEAD?



I CAN DO
THE VOICE...

...BUT I'M
NOT THE
VOICE.



I SAW
YOU BE
THE
VOICE.

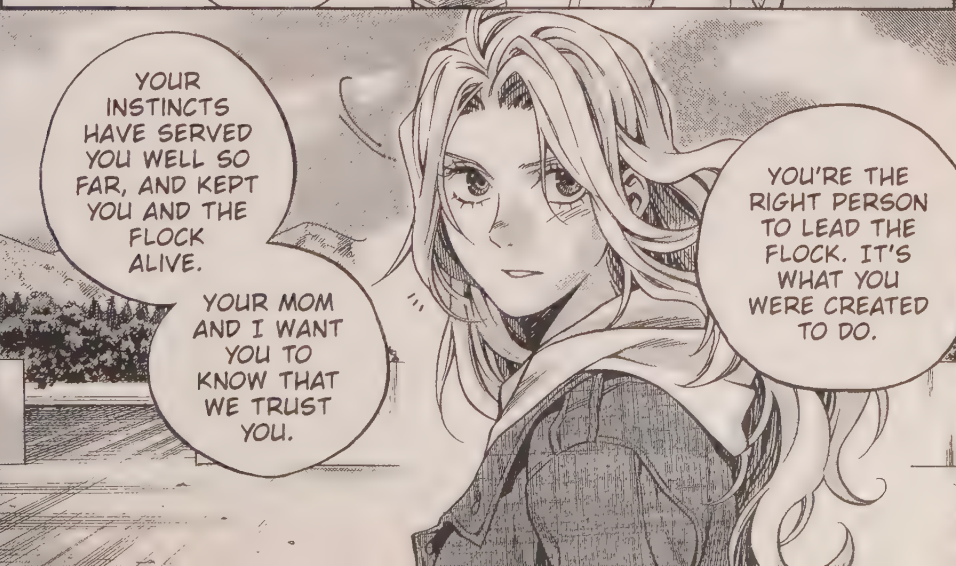
THAT'S ALL
PART OF
THE LARGER
PICTURE.



GREAT.
ANOTHER
PUZZLE.

WHATEVER.

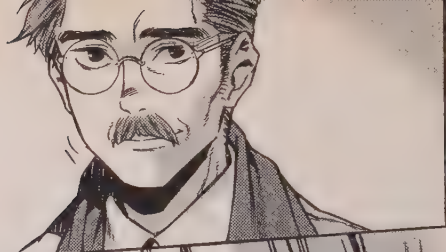
LISTEN,
MAX.



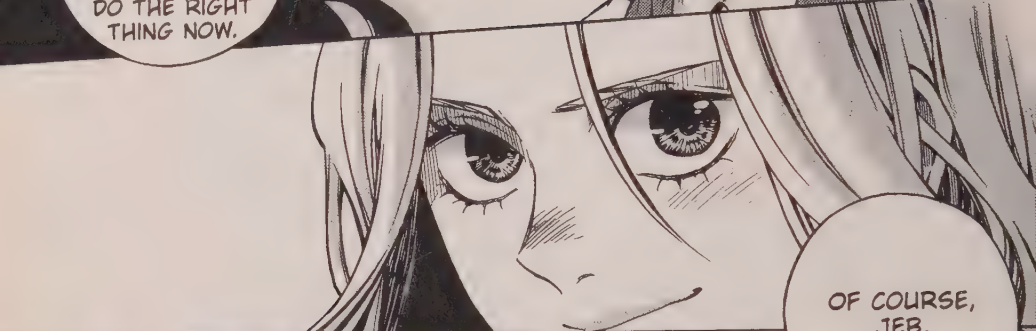
YOUR
INSTINCTS
HAVE SERVED
YOU WELL SO
FAR, AND KEPT
YOU AND THE
FLOCK
ALIVE.

YOUR MOM
AND I WANT
YOU TO
KNOW THAT
WE TRUST
YOU.

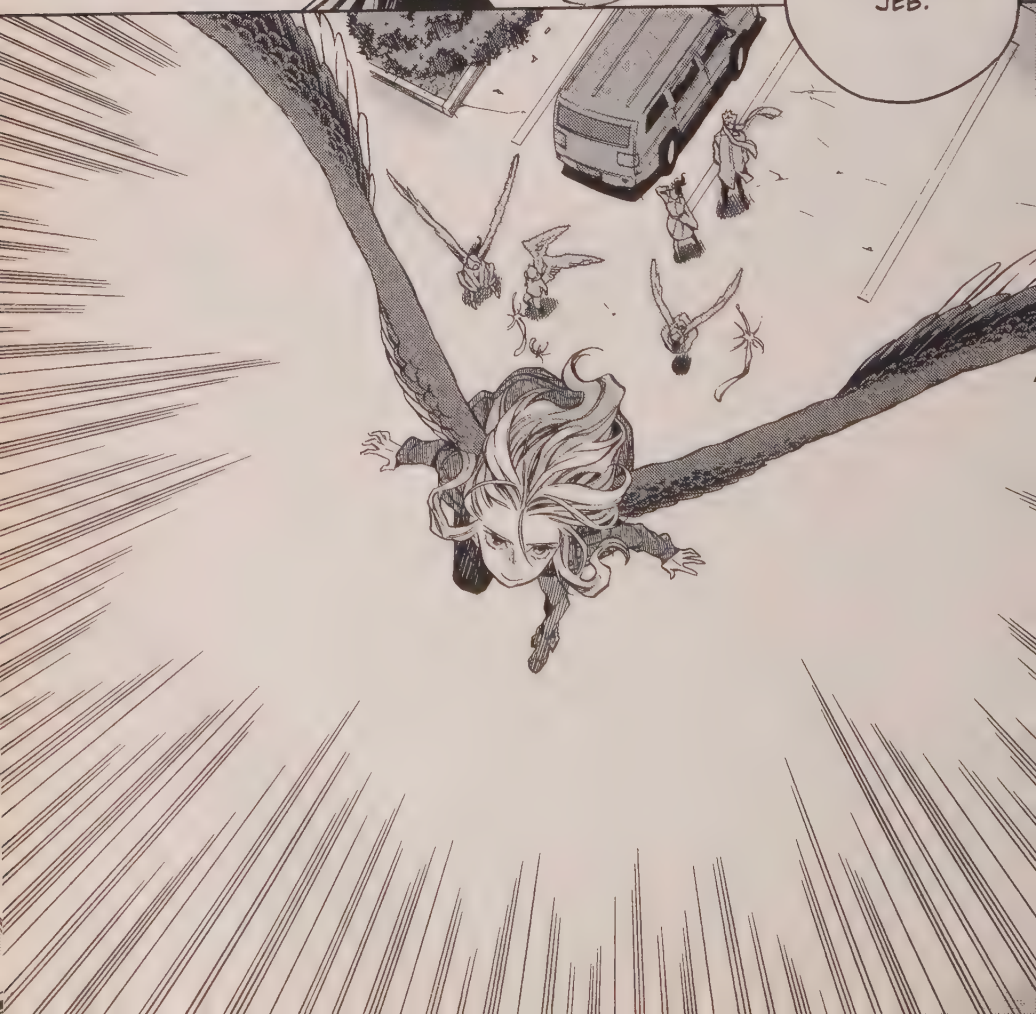
YOU'RE THE
RIGHT PERSON
TO LEAD THE
FLOCK. IT'S
WHAT YOU
WERE CREATED
TO DO.



YOU'RE
DOING A
TERRIFIC JOB AT
FINDING YOUR
OWN WAY. WE
TRUST YOU TO
DO THE RIGHT
THING NOW.



OF COURSE,
JEB.



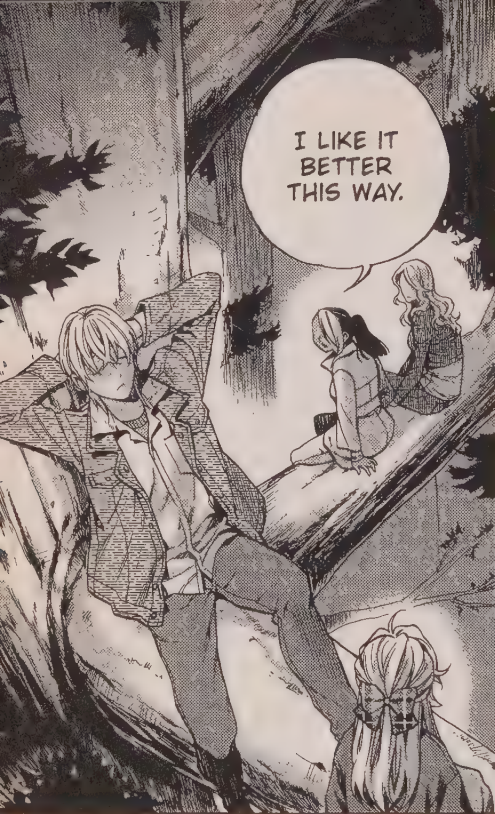
MAXIMUM
RIDE



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 43

WE'RE
FREE
AGAIN!

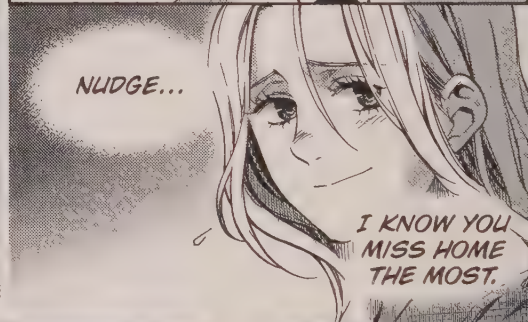




I LIKE IT
BETTER
THIS WAY.



I'LL MISS
THOSE
CHOCOLATE
CHIP COOKIES,
THOUGH.



NUDGE...

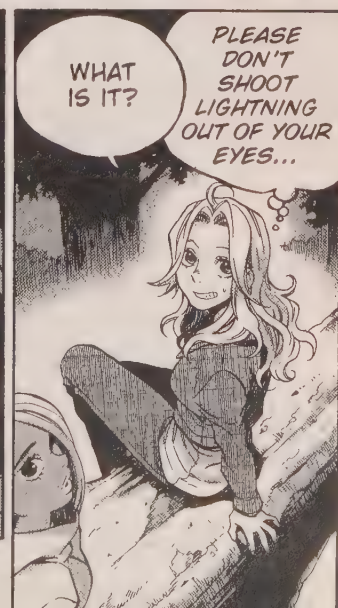
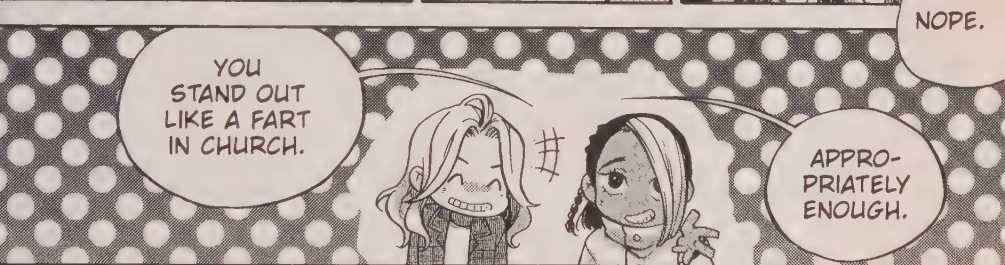
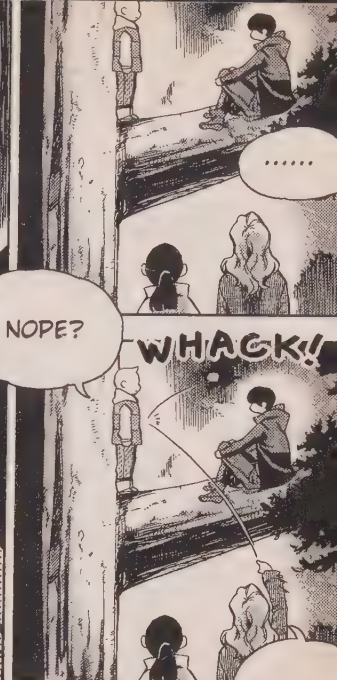
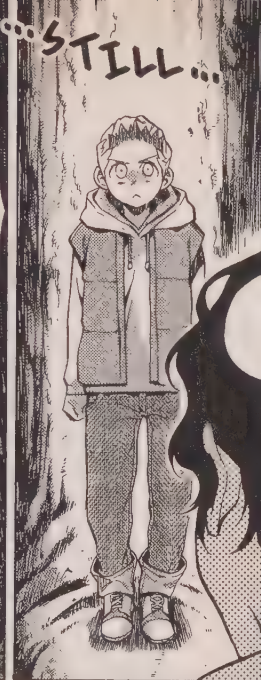
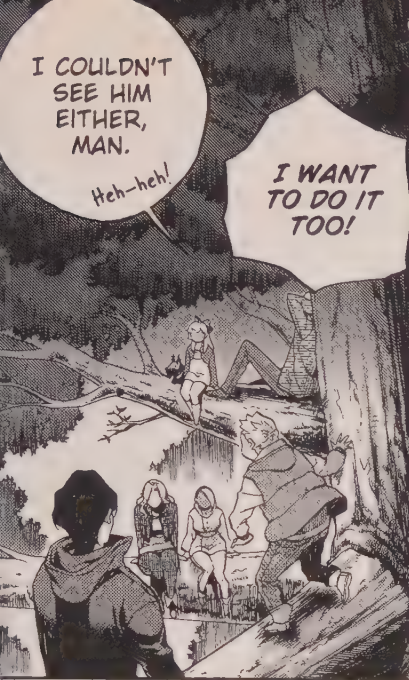
I KNOW YOU
MISS HOME
THE MOST.



HEY,
GUYS!

FANG'S GOT
A NEW SKILL
TOO! HE CAN
GO INVISIBLE!
I COULDN'T
SEE HIM AT
ALL!

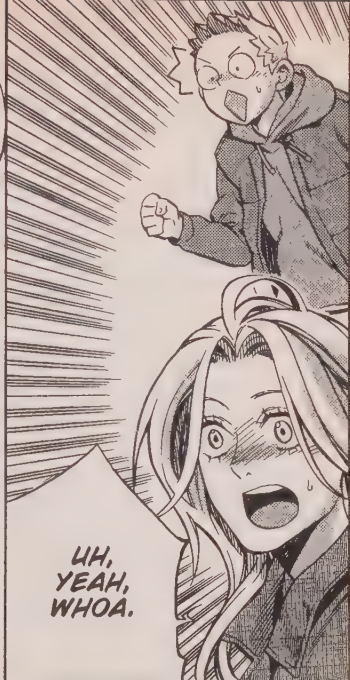
AHH...

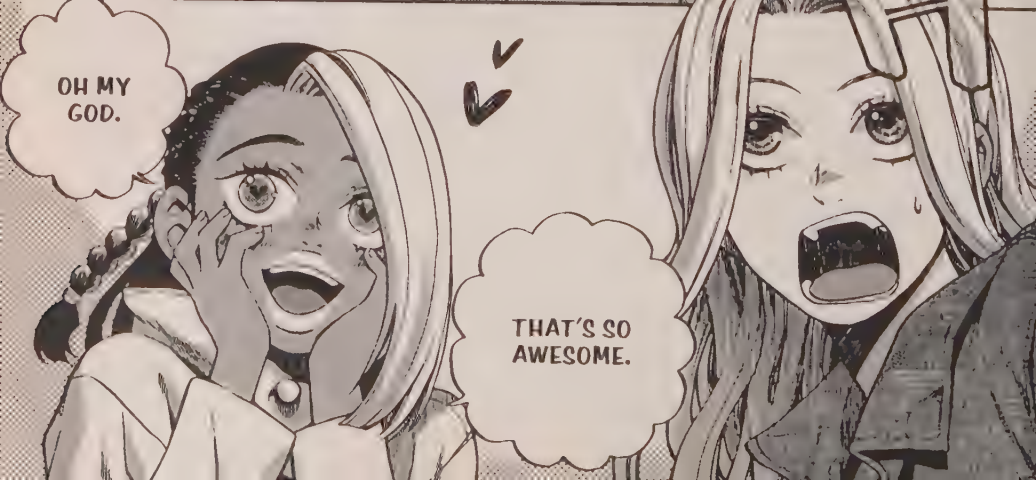




LOOK.

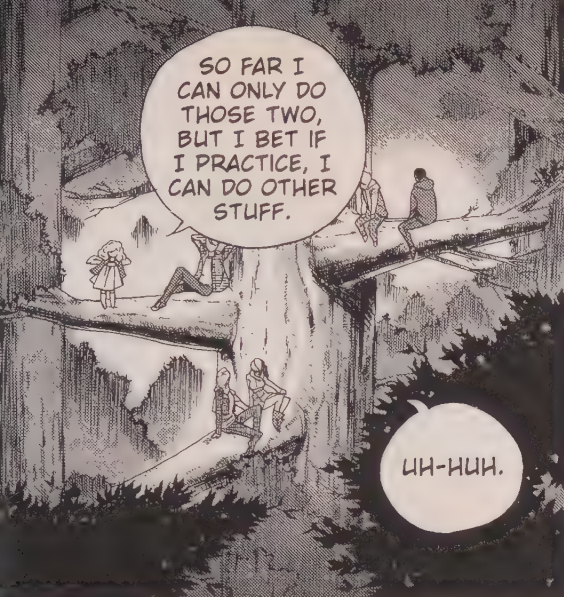
SHOOOM!





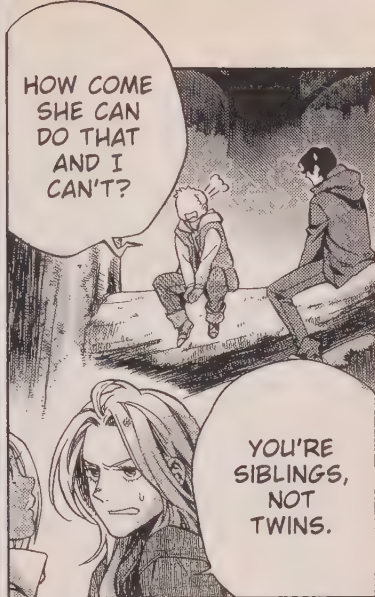
OH MY
GOD.

THAT'S SO
AWESOME.



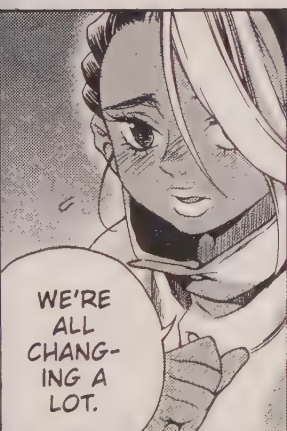
SO FAR I
CAN ONLY DO
THOSE TWO,
BUT I BET IF
I PRACTICE, I
CAN DO OTHER
STUFF.

UH-HUH.

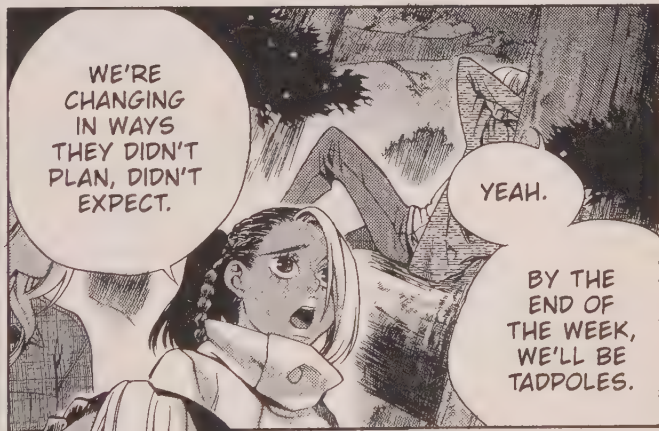


HOW COME
SHE CAN
DO THAT
AND I
CAN'T?

YOU'RE
SIBLINGS,
NOT
TWINS.



WE'RE
ALL
CHANG-
ING A
LOT.



WE'RE
CHANGING
IN WAYS
THEY DIDN'T
PLAN, DIDN'T
EXPECT.

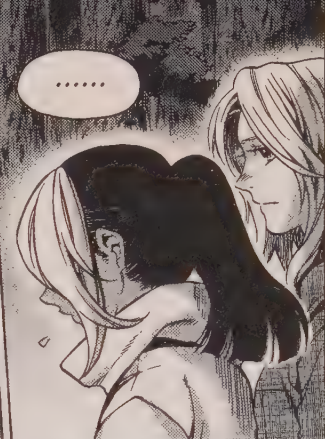
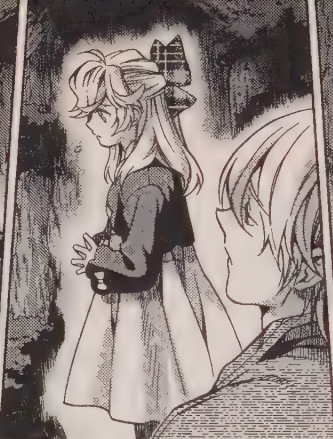
YEAH.

BY THE
END OF
THE WEEK,
WE'LL BE
TADPOLES.



IGGY!

I'M SERIOUS.
WE DON'T
KNOW WHAT'S
GOING TO
HAPPEN TO US.



IT'S
TRUE WE'RE
CHANGING,
AND IN WAYS
THEY DIDN'T
PROGRAM.

AND WE
HAVE NO IDEA
WHAT'S GOING
TO HAPPEN
NEXT.

BUT YOU
KNOW WHAT?
NO ONE ELSE
DOES EITHER.
IT'S THE ONE
WAY THAT WE'RE
LIKE THE REST OF
ALL THE PEOPLE
OUT THERE.

PEOPLE
CHANGE ALL
THE TIME, AND
THEY'RE NOT
SURE HOW
THEY'LL END
UP.

THEY MIGHT
HAVE THEIR
MOM'S EYES
OR THEIR
DAD'S NOSE.

THEY MIGHT
BE SHORT OR
TALL, ABLE
TO PLAY THE
PIANO OR
NOT.

IT'S
ALWAYS A
MYSTERY.

IT'S THE ONE
CONSTANT,
EVERYWHERE...

...WITH
EVERYONE.

WE'RE
JUST A
LITTLE MORE
EXCITING, A
LITTLE COOLER
THAN MOST.

Fang's Blog

[HOME](#) [Blog Posts](#) [Discussions](#) [Groups](#) [Photos](#) [Chat](#) [BBS](#)

Greetings, faithful readers. This site has had over 600,000 hits, which is unbelievable. It's not like we're here dropping Mentos into Coke bottles or anything. This is just us. But I'm glad you've tuned in.

The big news of today is that we've all decided to settle down and go to regular school and stuff, and Fox is going to make a reality TV series out of it, called *Bird Kids in the House!* They'll have like a hundred cameras all over the place, and they can film Iggy cooking, and Angel doing her weird stuff, and Total listening to his iPod.

They can film Max leading.

Nah, I'm just kidding. No reality series. Our lives are probably a little too real for most people, if you know what I'm saying. Although, hey, if anyone from Fox is reading this, make us an offer!

We're not sure what's going to happen next. After our weird meetings in D.C., we're craving more fresh air and fewer desk jockeys. But it's starting to occur to me (forgive me if I've been a little slow) that maybe we, the flock, I mean, should be working toward something besides just trying to eat enough every day. For a long time, our goal was to find our parents. And look how well that turned out for us. Now we're fresh out of goals, and you know what? It feels a little — tame. I mean, if we're not out there butting heads with the buttheads that are destroying the world, then what are we doing? What's our point? Why are we here?

Granted, our options are somewhat limited, given the number of people who want to kill us, or worse. Plus, I understand there are pesky child labor laws that will get in our way. Frankly, though we can do all sorts of cool stuff, we're not actually qualified for a lot of occupations. Like, any occupation that requires actual education. Which pretty much leaves the entertainment industry.

But I've been thinking . . . maybe we could become spokes-mutants. For different causes. We could be the poster children for both animal and child abuse, for example.

If anyone has any answers, drop me a line.

— Fang out



Fang
Welcome!

Visitor number
.....
98,345

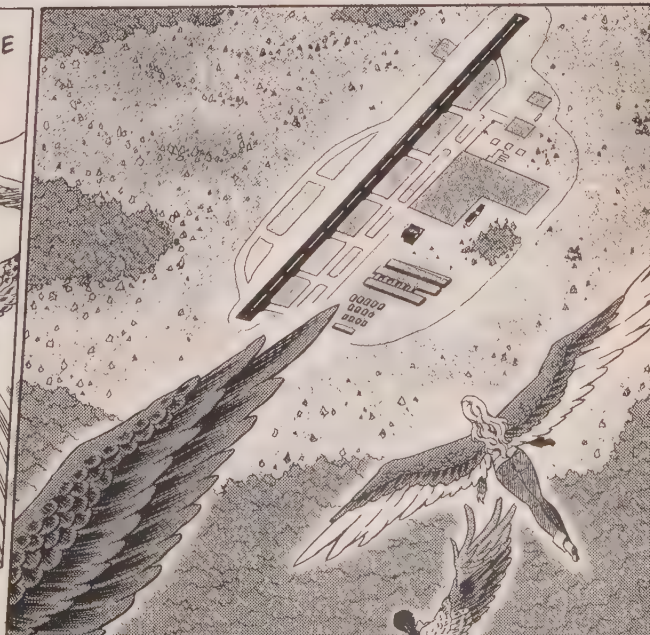
THE NEXT DAY

YOU
SURE
THIS
IS THE
RIGHT
PLACE?

THAT'S
WHAT THE
VOICE SAID.

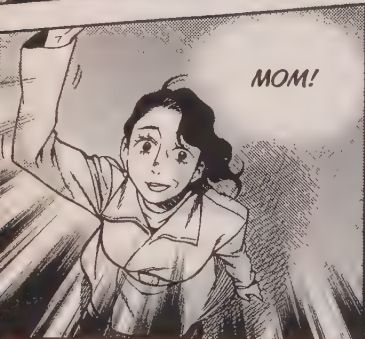
SHOULD BE
AROUND
HERE...

MAX,
LOOK!





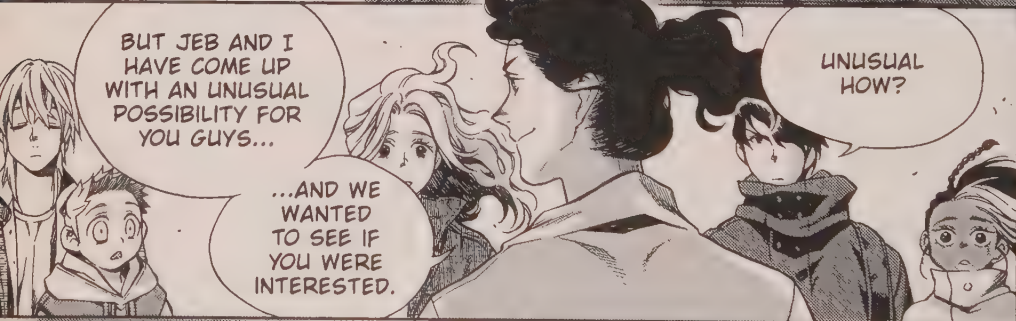
WHAT'S
GOING ON? I
THOUGHT I
WOULDN'T
SEE YOU FOR
A WHILE.



MOM!



ME TOO.



BUT JEB AND I
HAVE COME UP
WITH AN UNUSUAL
POSSIBILITY FOR
YOU GUYS...

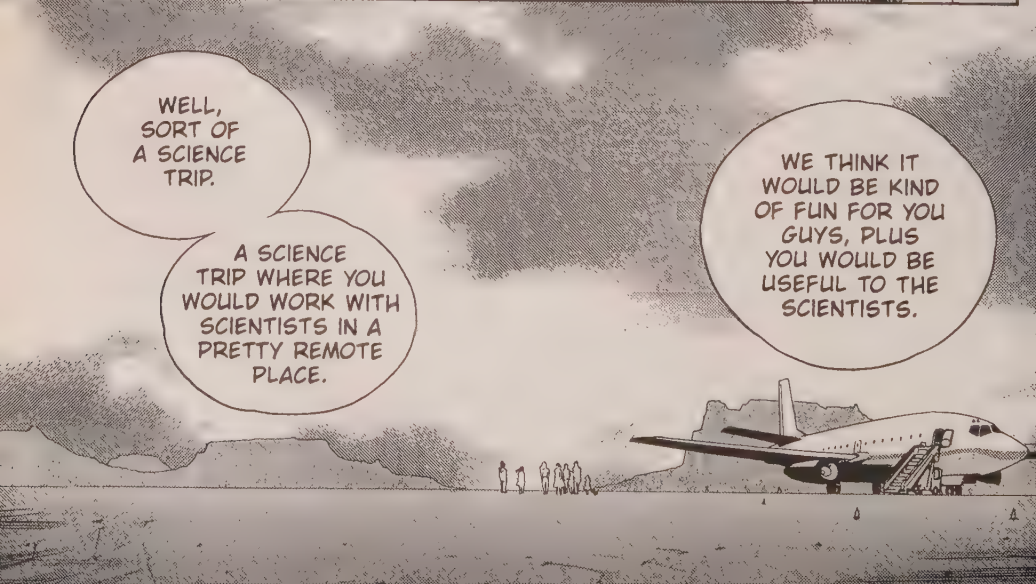
...AND WE
WANTED
TO SEE IF
YOU WERE
INTERESTED.

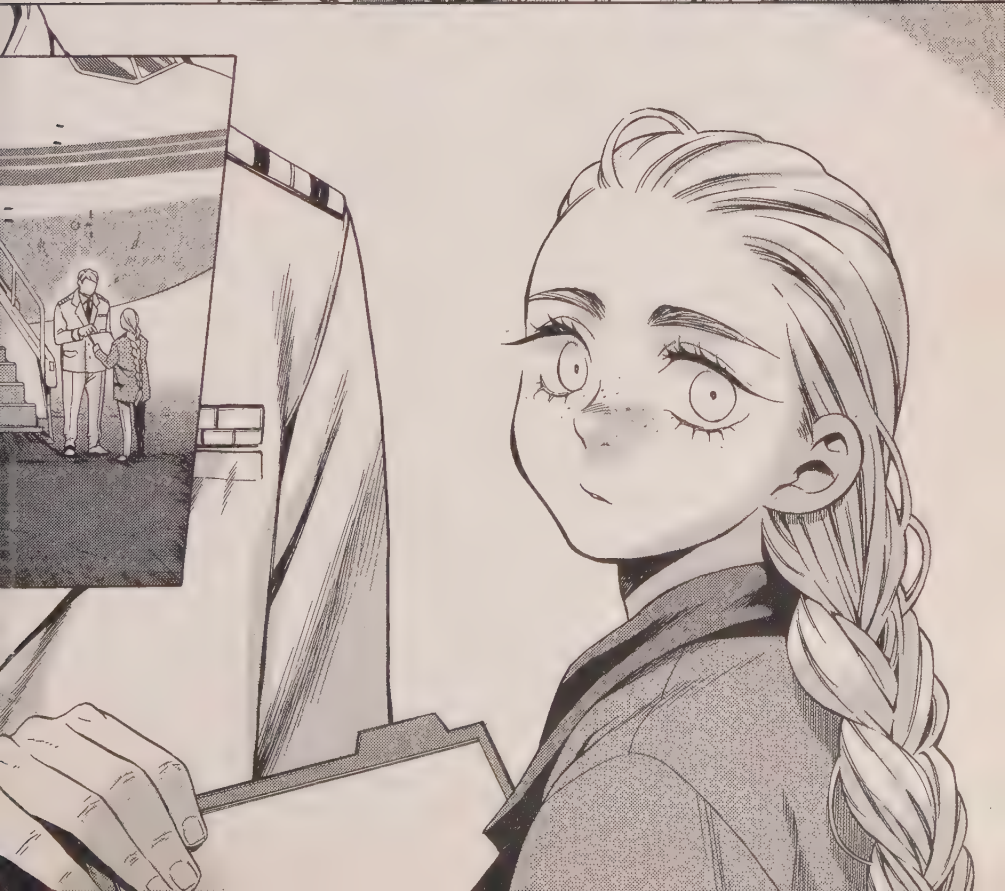
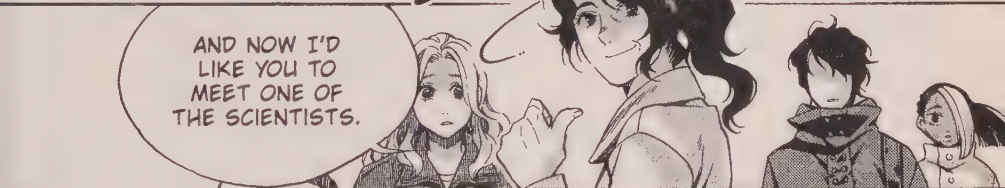
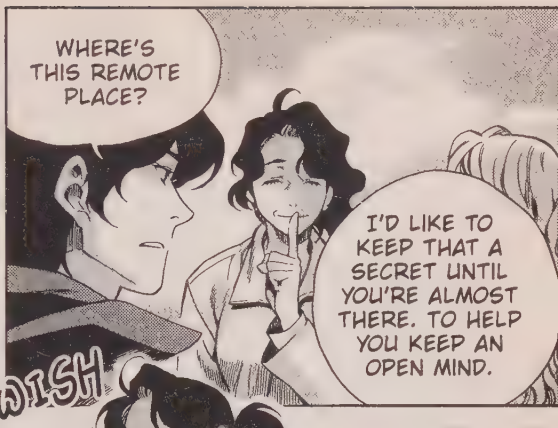
UNUSUAL
HOW?

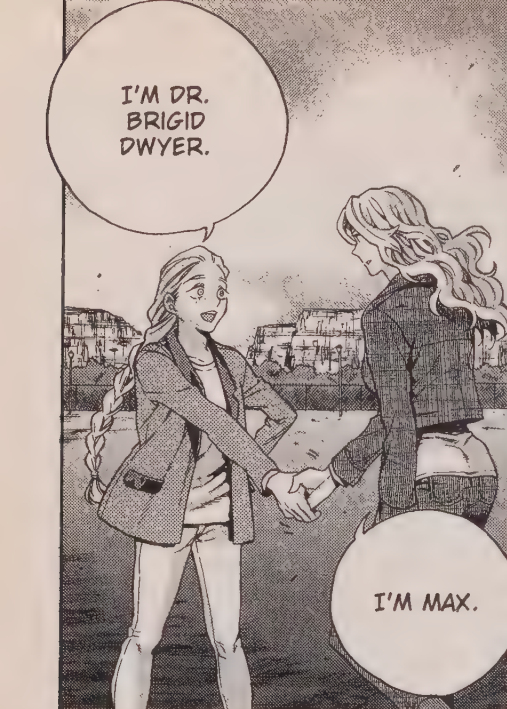
WELL,
SORT OF
A SCIENCE
TRIP.

A SCIENCE
TRIP WHERE YOU
WOULD WORK WITH
SCIENTISTS IN A
PRETTY REMOTE
PLACE.

WE THINK IT
WOULD BE KIND
OF FUN FOR YOU
GUYS, PLUS
YOU WOULD BE
USEFUL TO THE
SCIENTISTS.

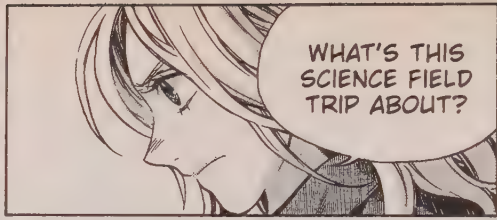




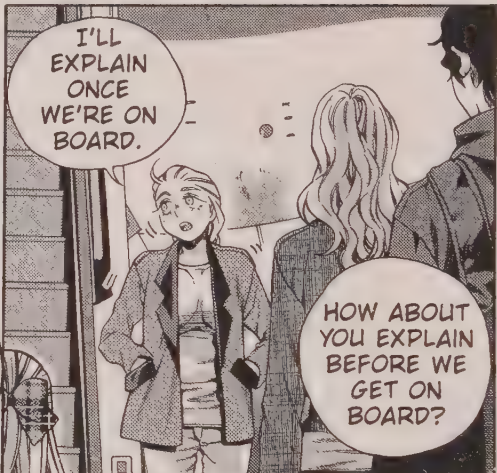


I'M DR.
BRIGID
DWYER.

I'M MAX.

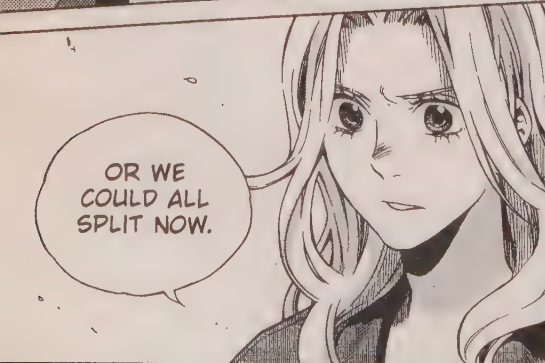
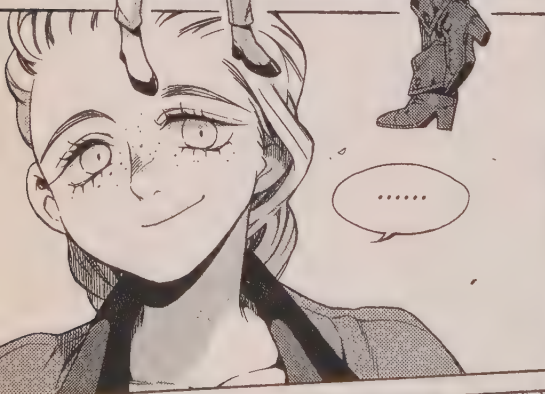


WHAT'S THIS
SCIENCE FIELD
TRIP ABOUT?

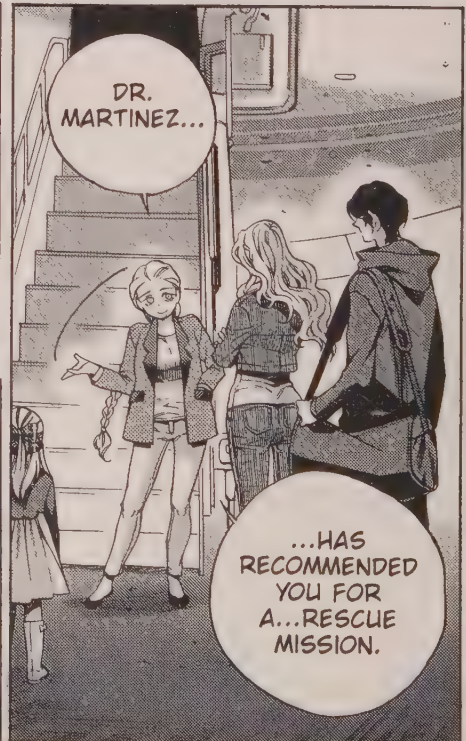


I'LL
EXPLAIN
ONCE
WE'RE ON
BOARD.

HOW ABOUT
YOU EXPLAIN
BEFORE WE
GET ON
BOARD?



OR WE
COULD ALL
SPLIT NOW.



DR.
MARTINEZ...

...HAS
RECOMMENDED
YOU FOR
A...RESCUE
MISSION.

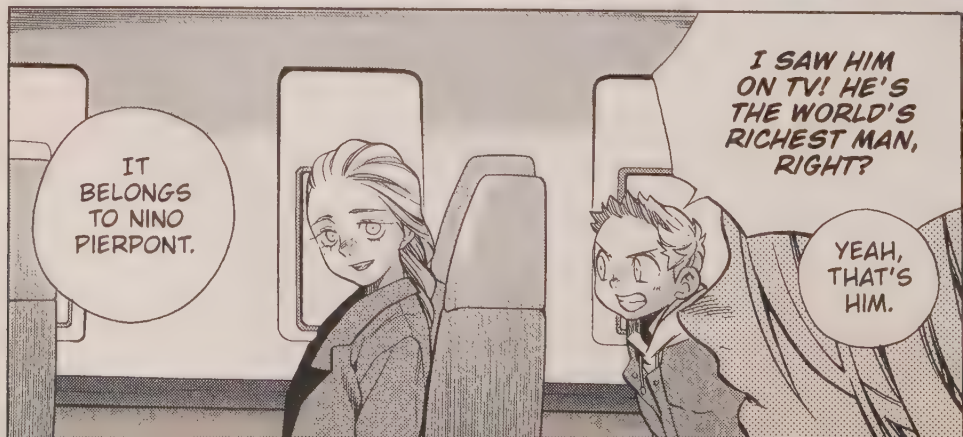
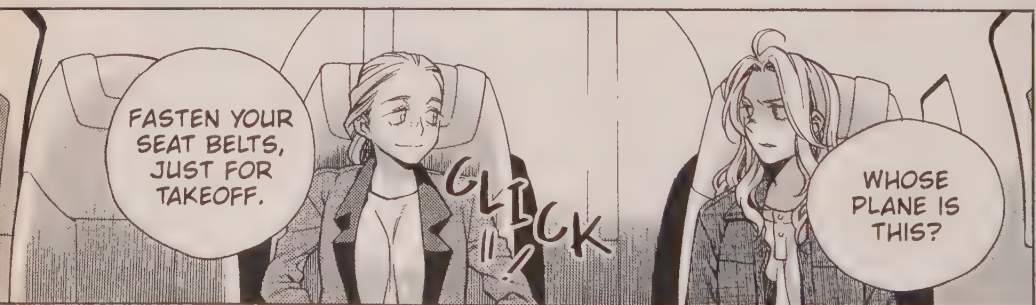
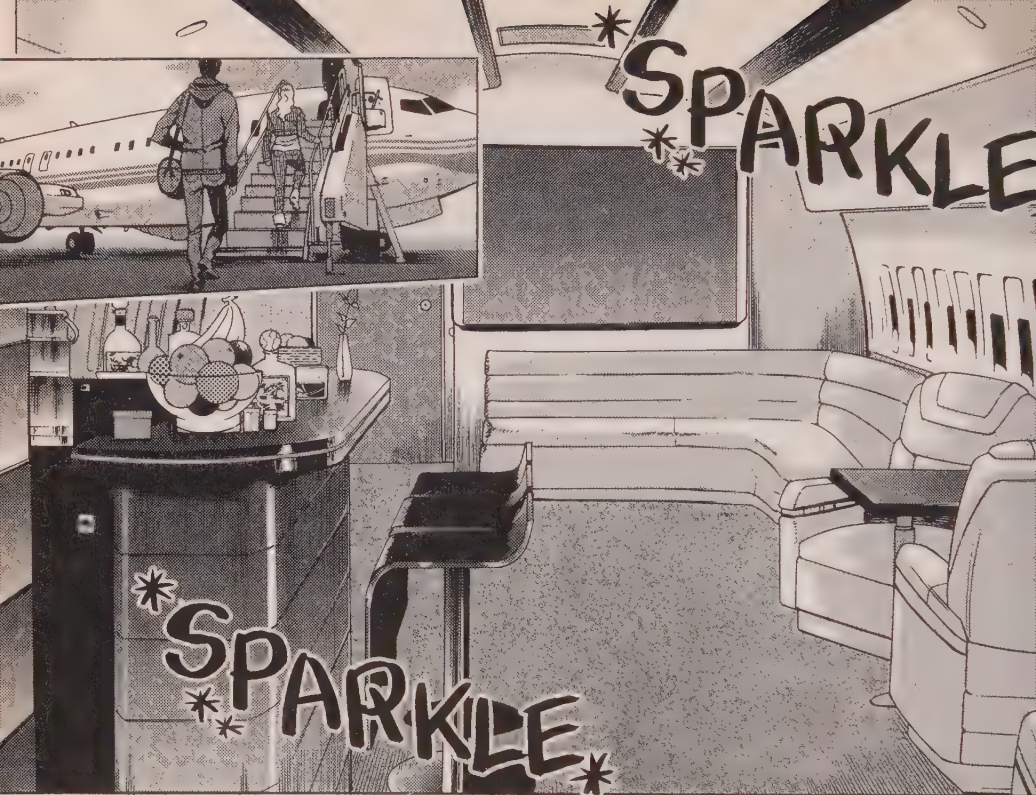
WHAT—
OR
WHO...

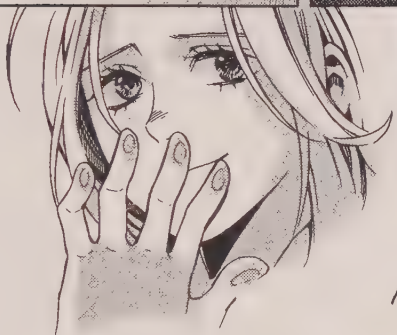
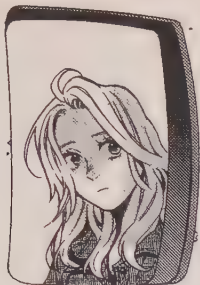
...ARE WE
RESCUING?

GRIN...

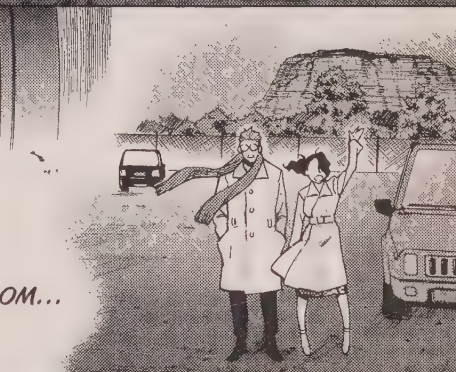
THE
WORLD?







MOM...



SO
WHERE
ARE WE
GOING?

PLEASE TELL
ME SOMEPLACE
WARM. I'VE HAD
ENOUGH COLD
WEATHER THIS
WINTER TO
LAST ME A
LIFETIME.

We're
ready
for
takeoff.

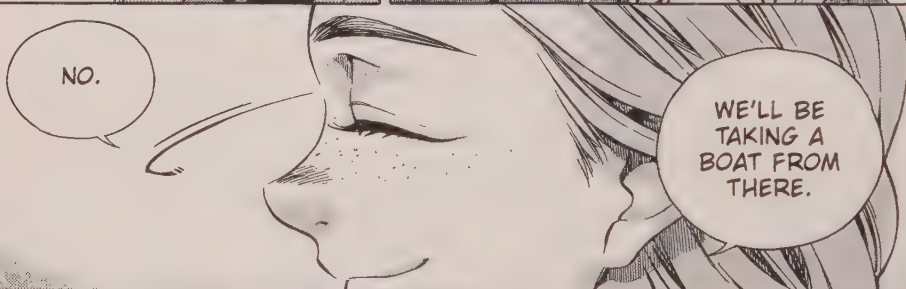
SOUTH
AMERICA.



ARGENTINA.



RAIN
FOREST?



NO.

WE'LL BE
TAKING A
BOAT FROM
THERE.



A BOAT?

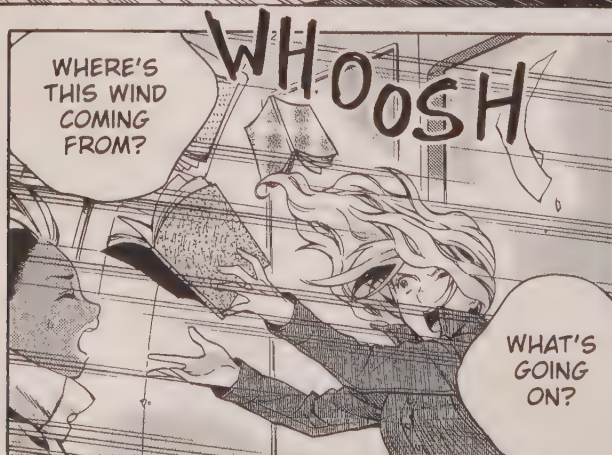
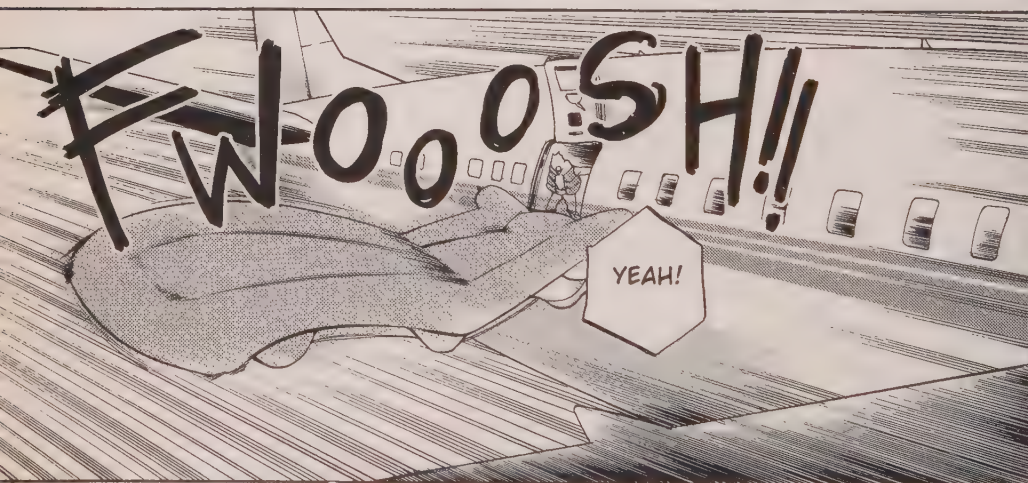
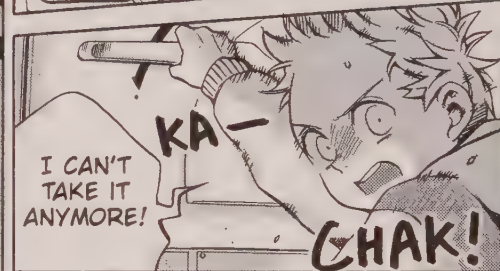
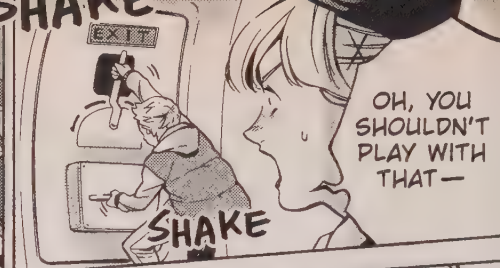


ARGENTINA



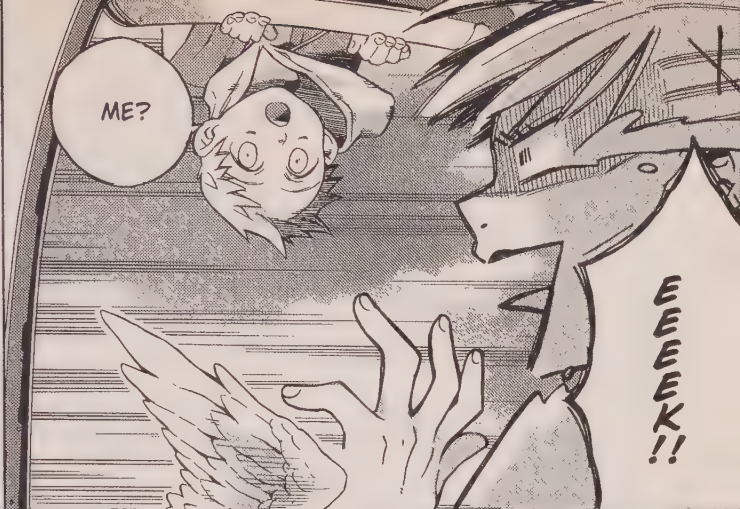
BUENOS AIRES

ARE WE
THERE
YET?



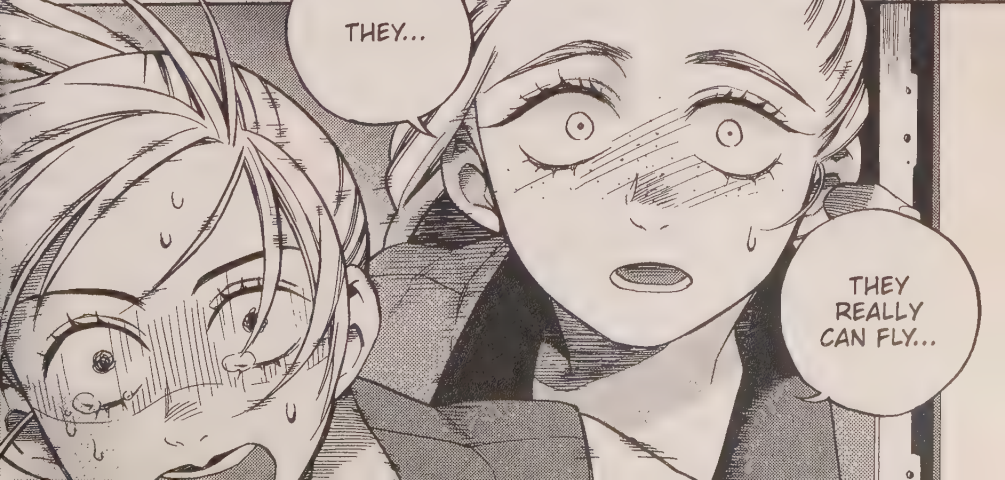
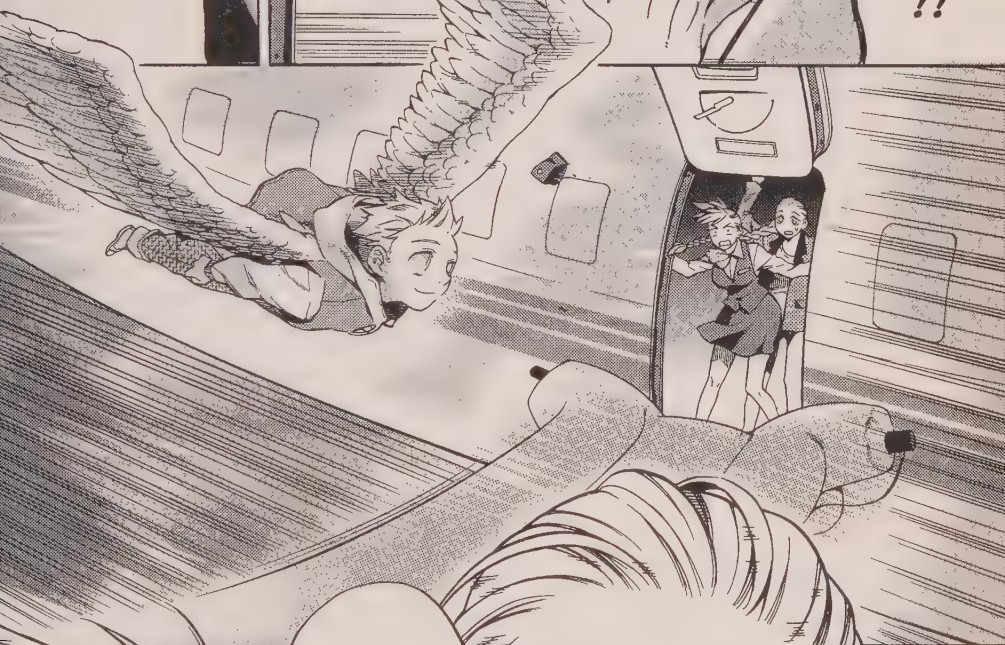


OH MY
GOD, OH
MY GOD,
KID—!!



ME?

EEEEK!!



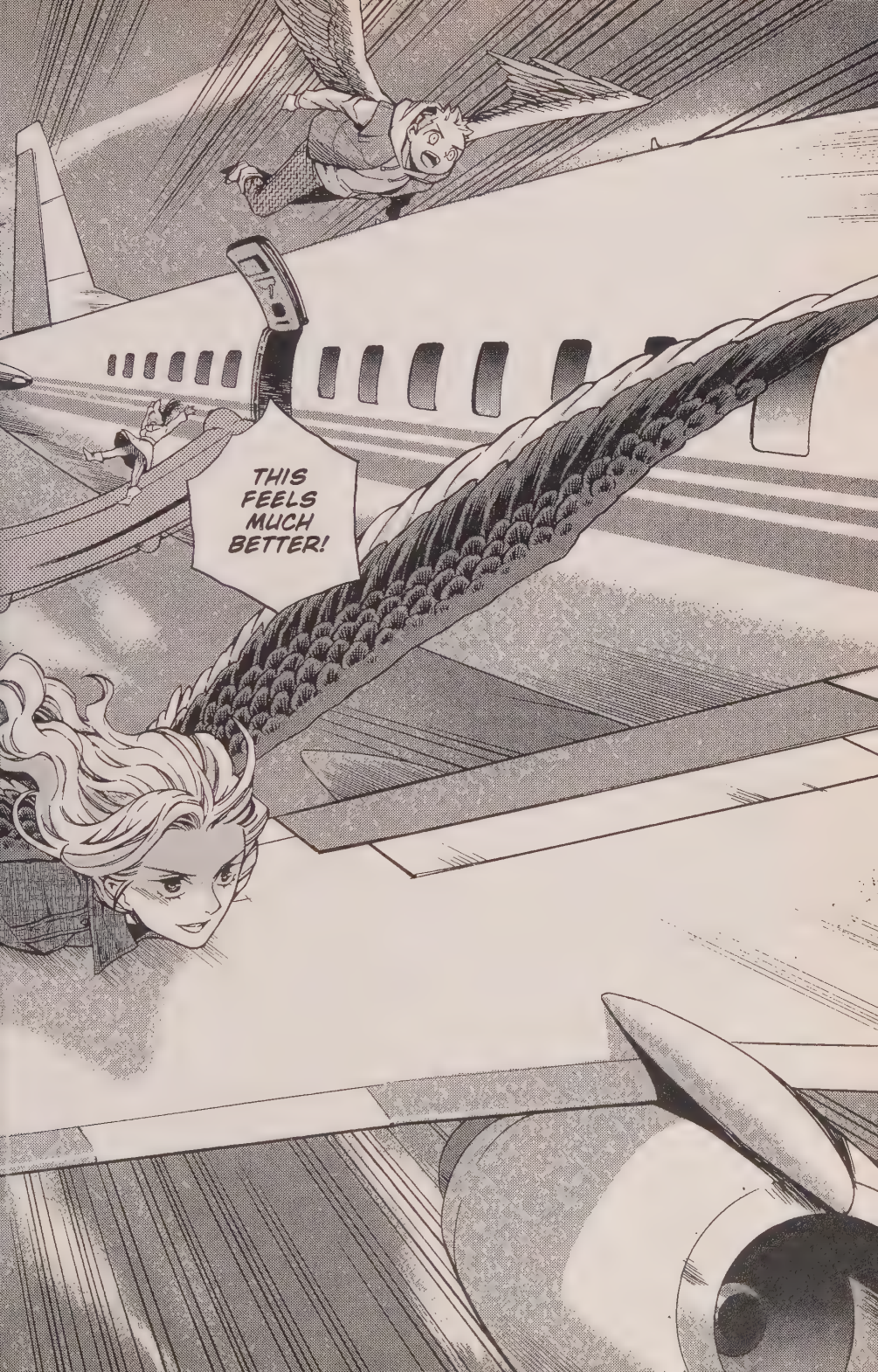
THEY...

THEY
REALLY
CAN FLY...

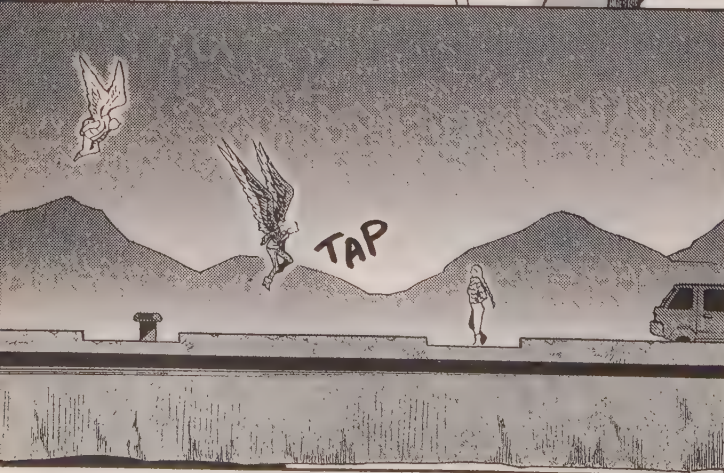
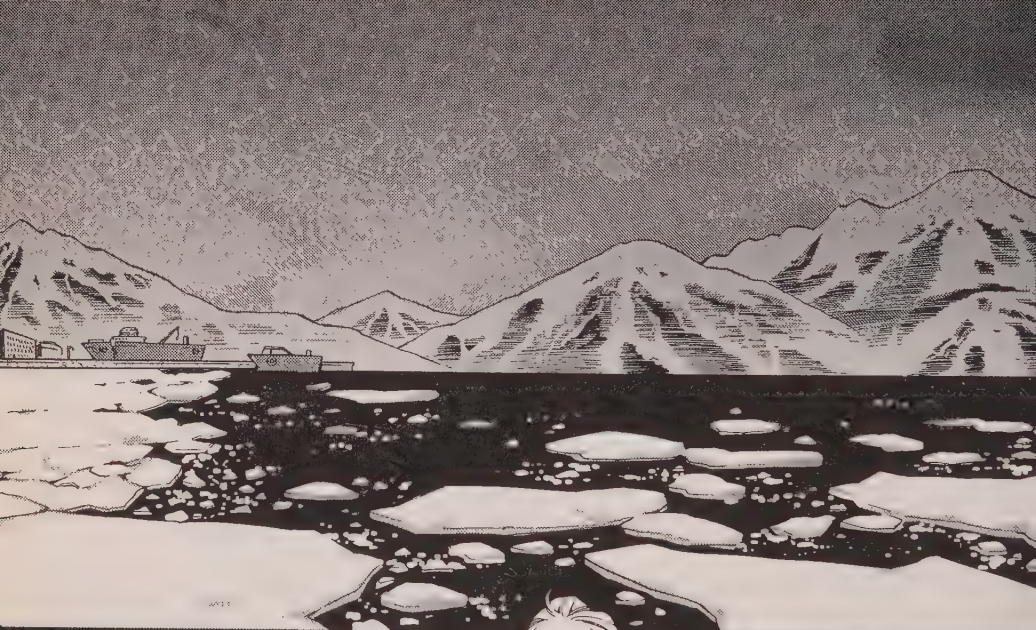


WELL, IT'S
NOT JUST AN
ELABORATE
HOAX.

WE'LL
FOLLOW
YOU!



THIS
FEELS
MUCH
BETTER!



IT'S COLD.
GREAT.

IT'S...

I'M
SORRY.

I KNOW
BEING ABLE
TO FLY
WASN'T
YOUR
CHOICE...

...VERY
BEAUTIFUL.

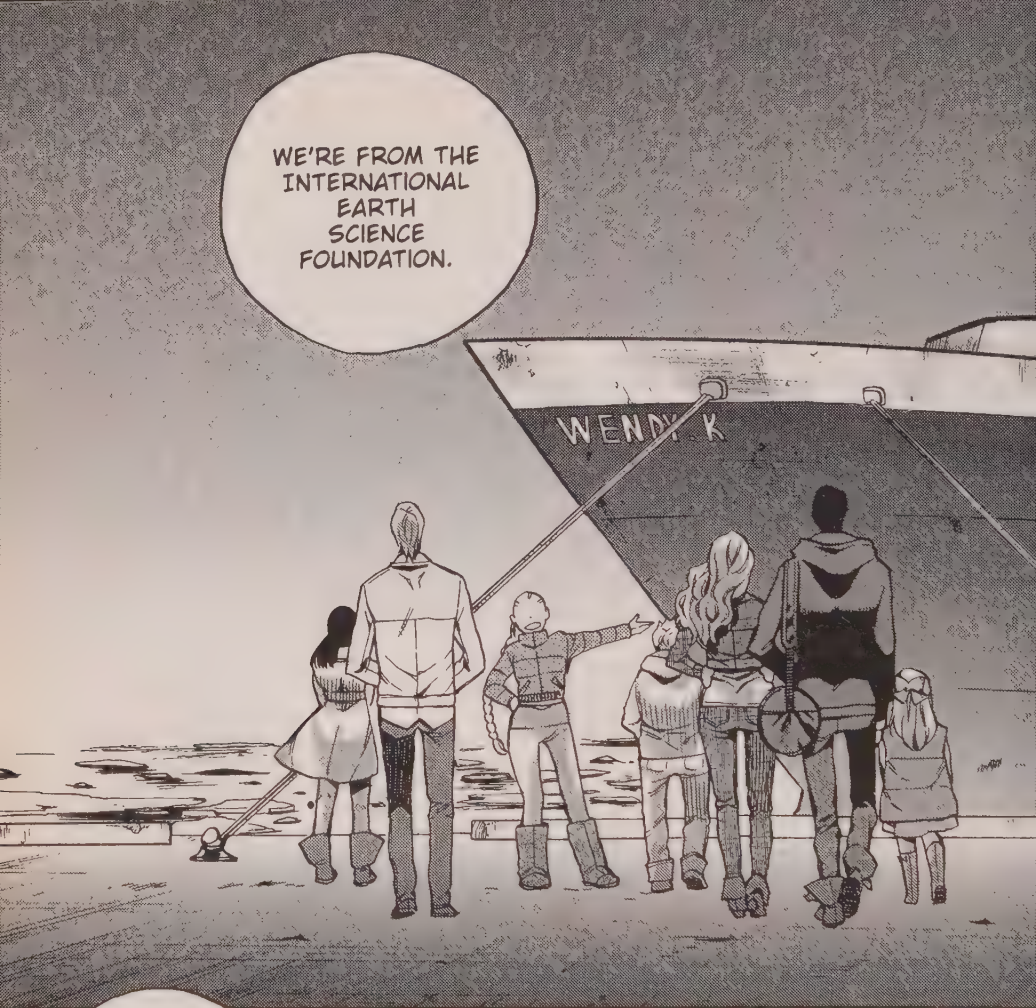
...AND I
KNOW ONLY
SOME OF
THE TRAUMA
YOU'VE
ENDURED
BECAUSE
OF IT.

BUT TO
ME, ON THE
OUTSIDE, IT
SEEMS BOTH
BEAUTIFUL
AND
ENVIABLE.

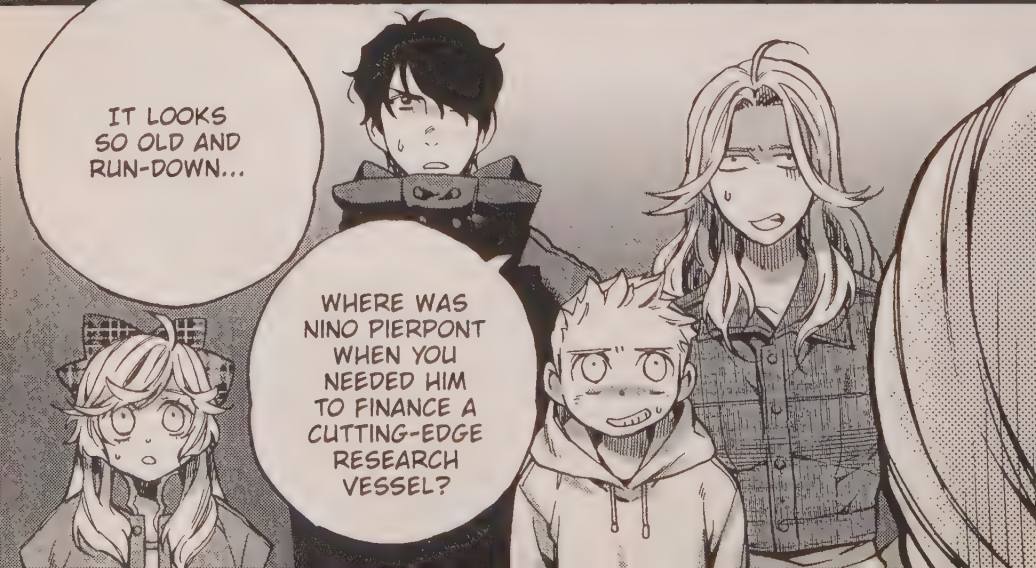
.....

THIS...

...IS OUR
RESEARCH
VESSEL.

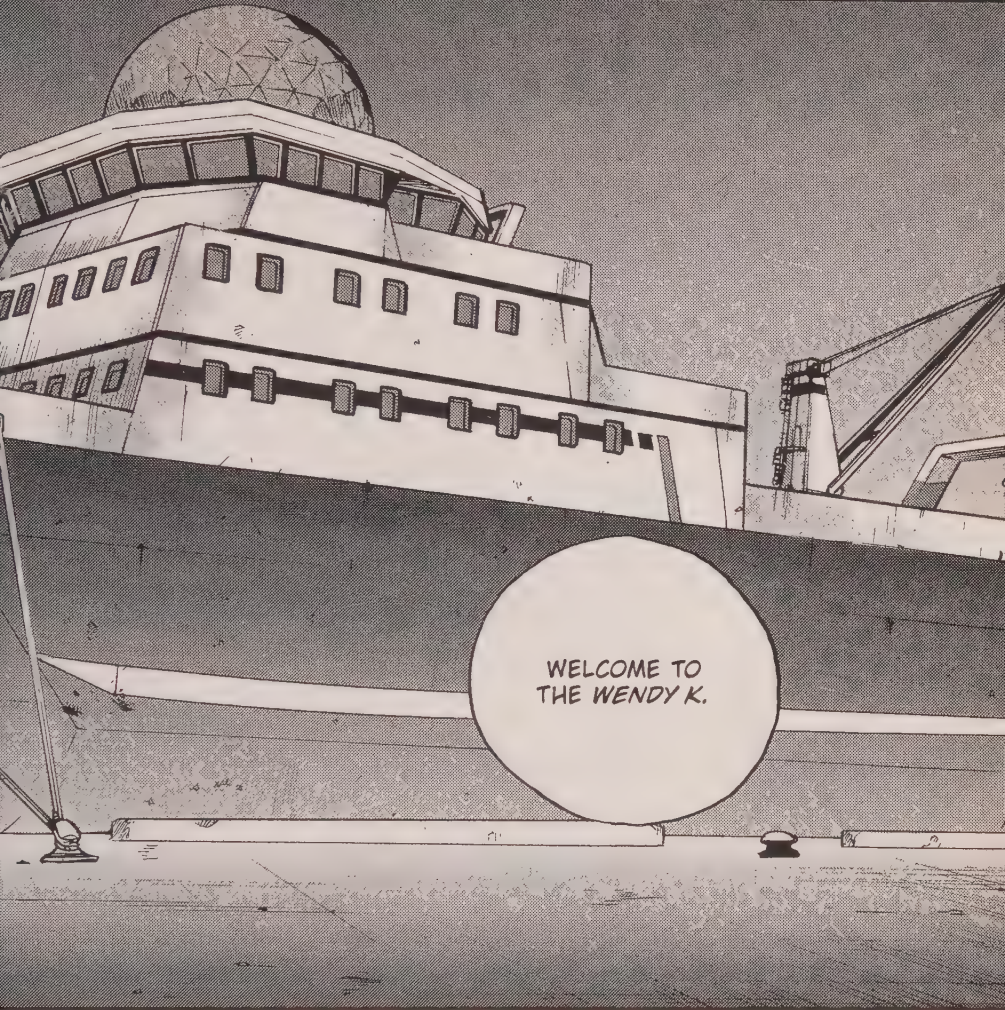


WE'RE FROM THE
INTERNATIONAL
EARTH
SCIENCE
FOUNDATION.

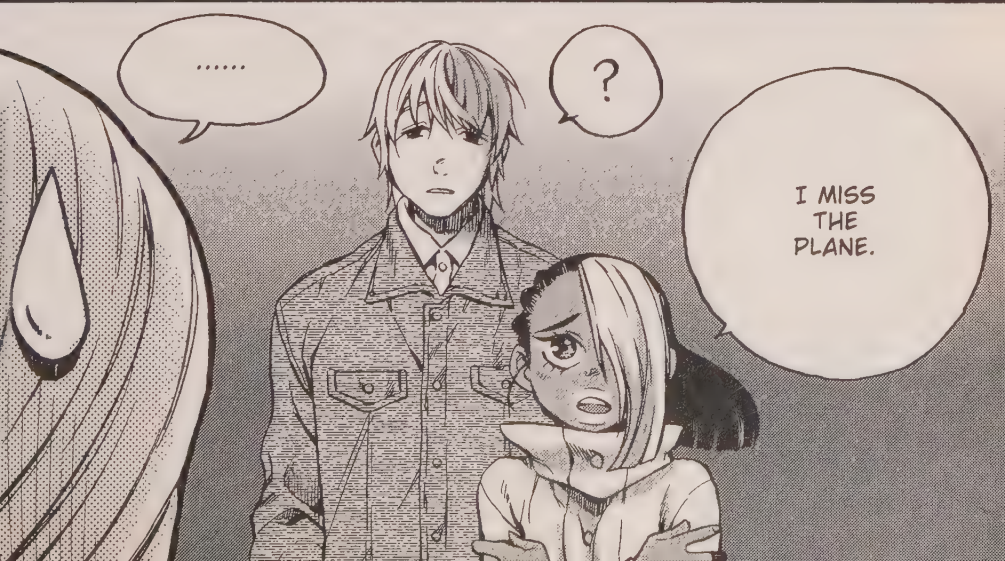


IT LOOKS
SO OLD AND
RUN-DOWN...

WHERE WAS
NINO PIERPONT
WHEN YOU
NEEDED HIM
TO FINANCE A
CUTTING-EDGE
RESEARCH
VESSEL?



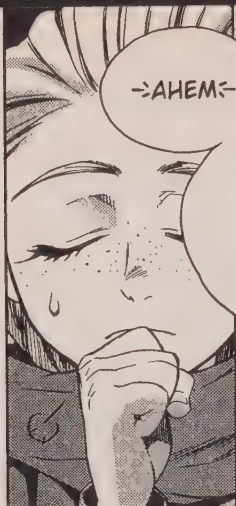
WELCOME TO
THE WENDY K.



.....

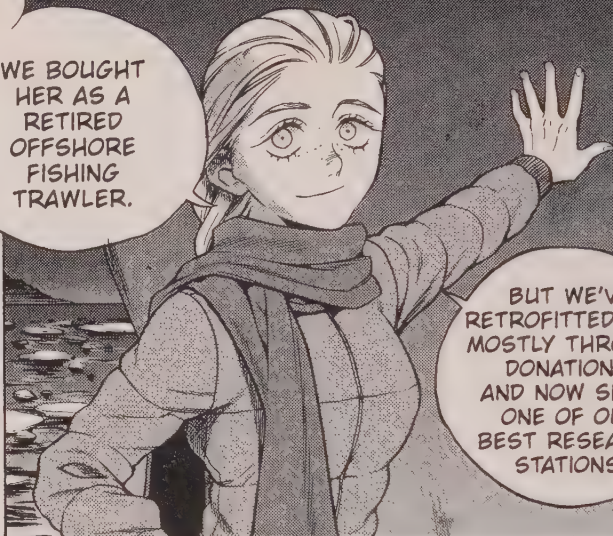
?

I MISS
THE
PLANE.

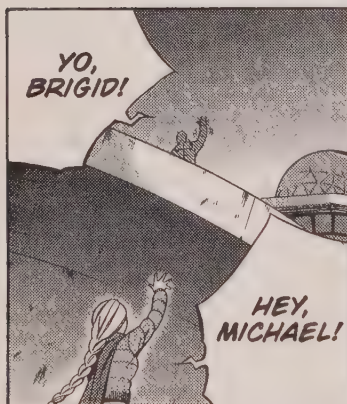


—AH—

WE BOUGHT
HER AS A
RETIRED
OFFSHORE
FISHING
TRAWLER.

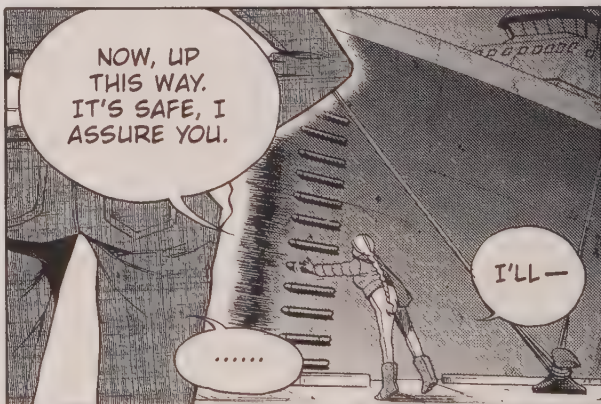


BUT WE'VE
RETROFITTED HER,
MOSTLY THROUGH
DONATIONS,
AND NOW SHE'S
ONE OF OUR
BEST RESEARCH
STATIONS.



YO,
BRIGID!

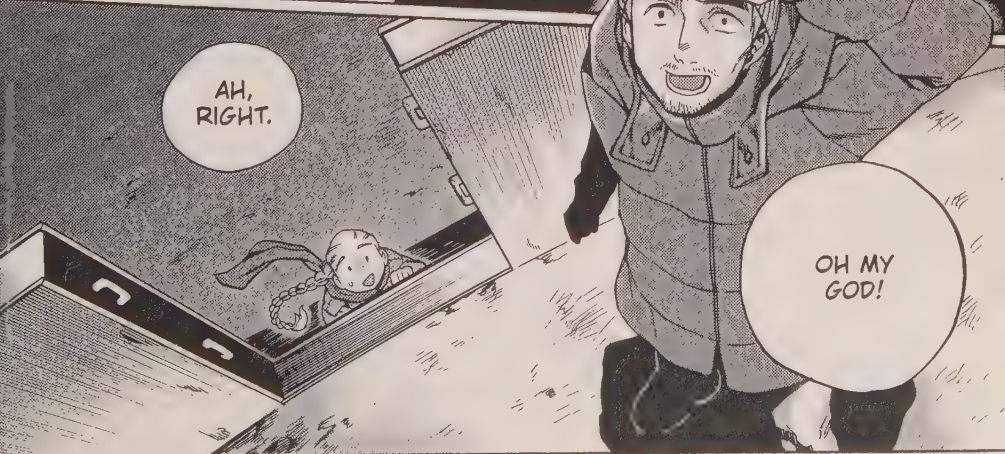
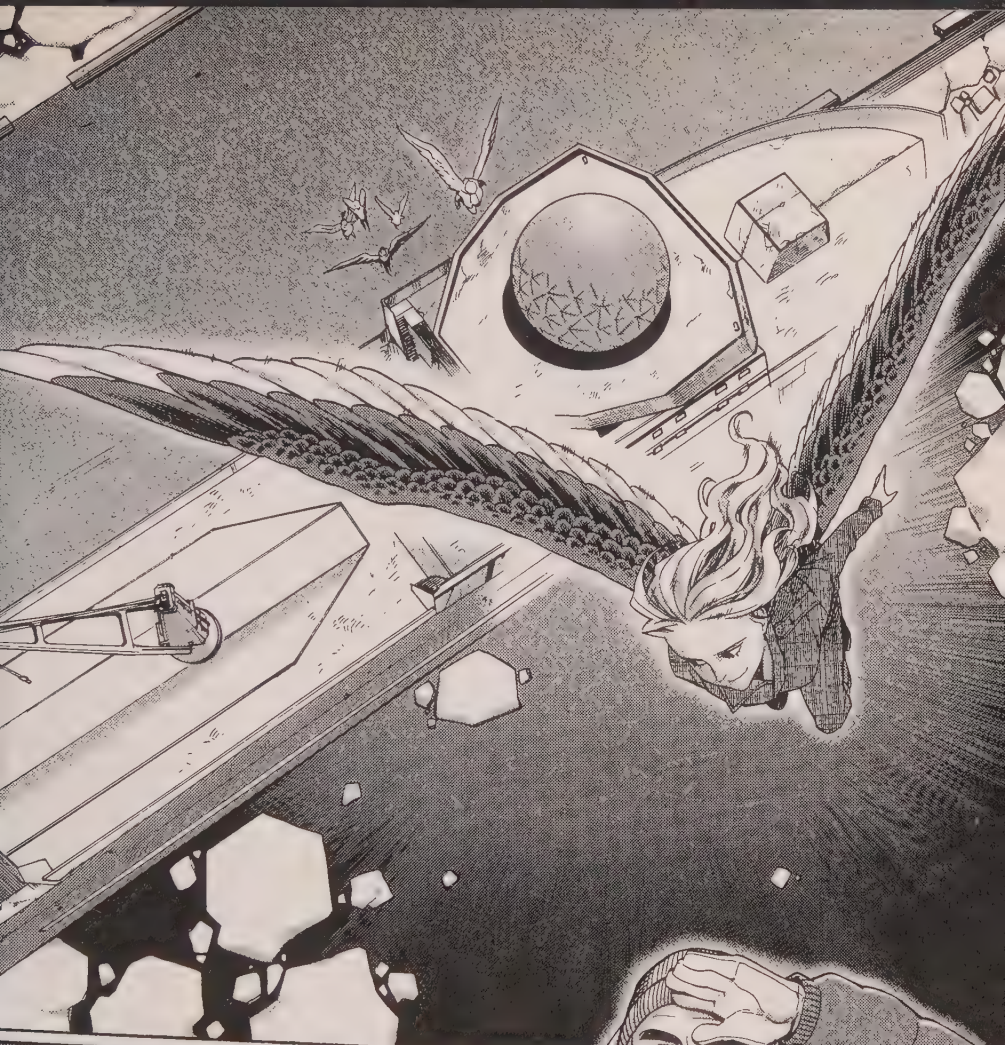
HEY,
MICHAEL!



NOW, UP
THIS WAY.
IT'S SAFE, I
ASSURE YOU.

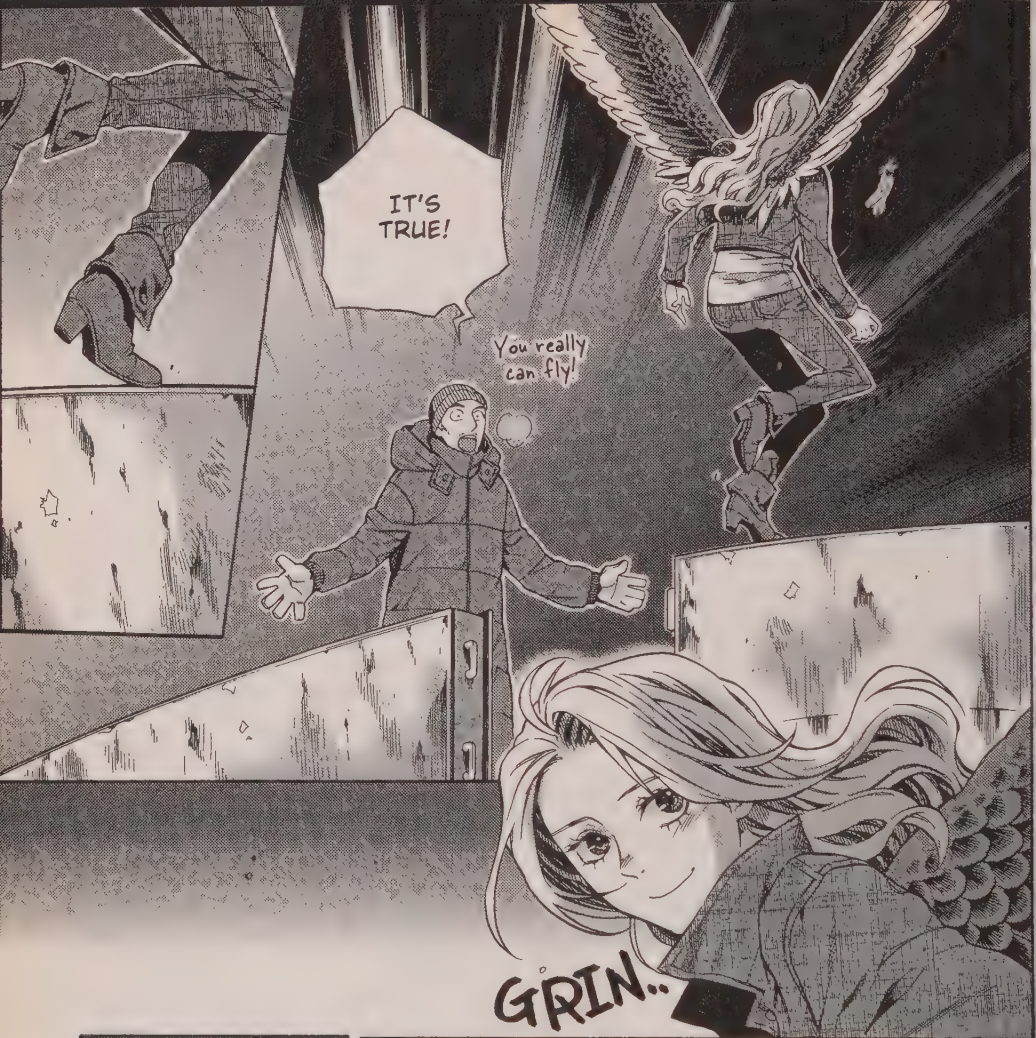
I'LL —



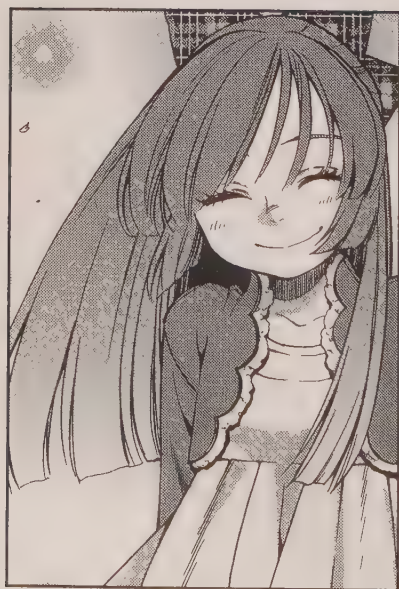


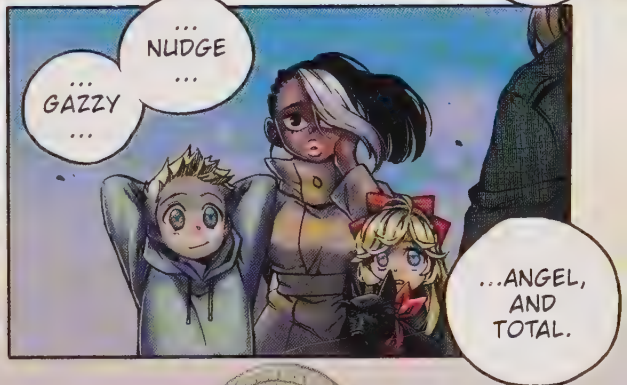
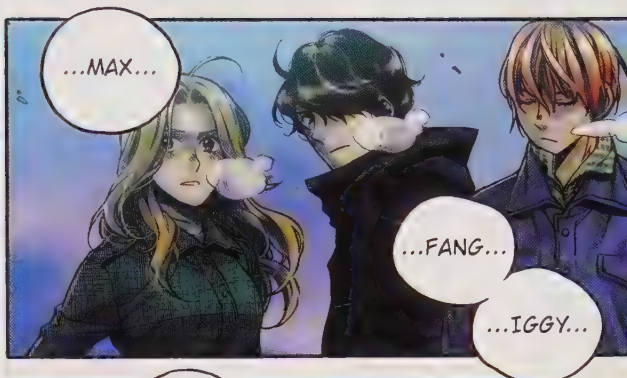
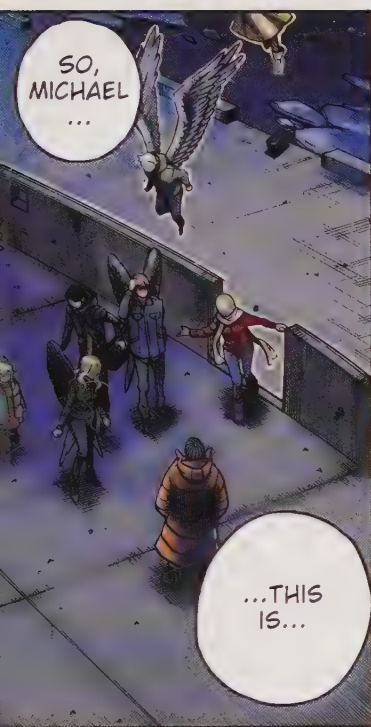
AH,
RIGHT.

OH MY
GOD!



MAXIMUM
RIDE







NICE TO
MEET YOU,
BUT...

...WE STILL
DON'T KNOW
WHY WE'RE
HERE.



BRIGID
DIDN'T
TELL
YOU?



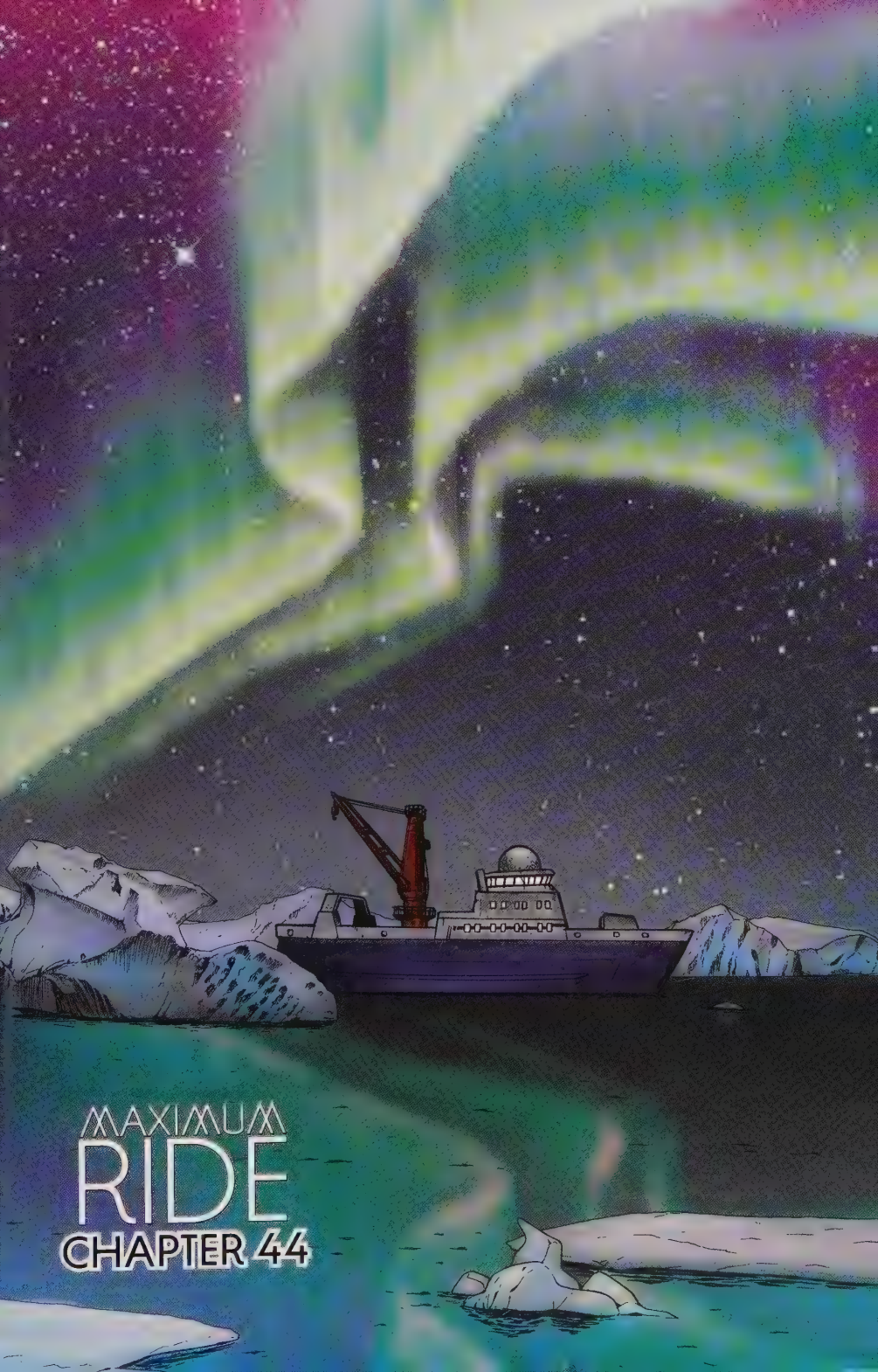
YOU'RE
HERE TO HELP
US GATHER
DATA FOR A
RESEARCH
PROJECT...

...ABOUT
GLOBAL
WARMING
AND ITS
EFFECTS ON
ANTARCTICA,
AMONG OTHER
PLACES.



IN
SHORT...

...YOU'RE
HERE TO HELP
US SAVE THE
WORLD.



MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 44



WE'RE
HEADED FOR
THE SOUTH
POLE!

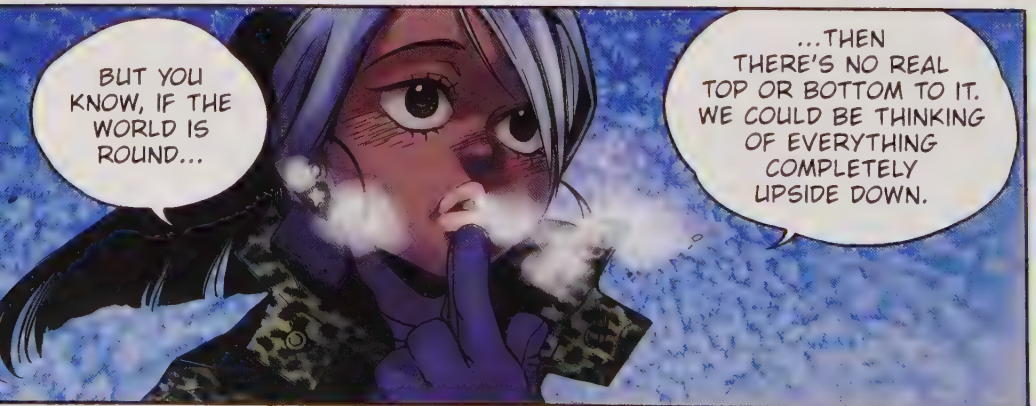
HAHAHA

AND IT'S,
LIKE...

...SO FAR
SOUTH THAT
IT'S THE BOTTOM
OF THE WHOLE
WORLD.

I really
really
hate the
cold.

SHIVER
SHIVER



BUT YOU
KNOW, IF THE
WORLD IS
ROUND...

...THEN
THERE'S NO REAL
TOP OR BOTTOM TO IT.
WE COULD BE THINKING
OF EVERYTHING
COMPLETELY
UPSIDE DOWN.

YOU'RE
MAKING
MY HEAD
HURT.

IT'S
SO SMALL
IN HERE,
LIKE A
DOGHOUSE.

TOTAL,
YOU ARE
A DOG.

GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE

AND I'M
GETTING
SEASICK!

HEY
THERE!

GAH!!

BLEGH!

LET'S
GATHER
IN THE
CONFERENCE
ROOM!

PANT

PANT

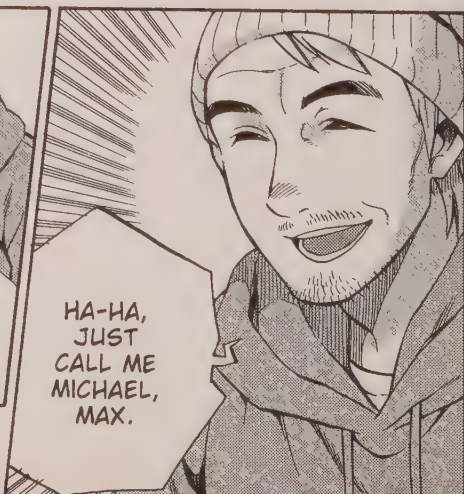
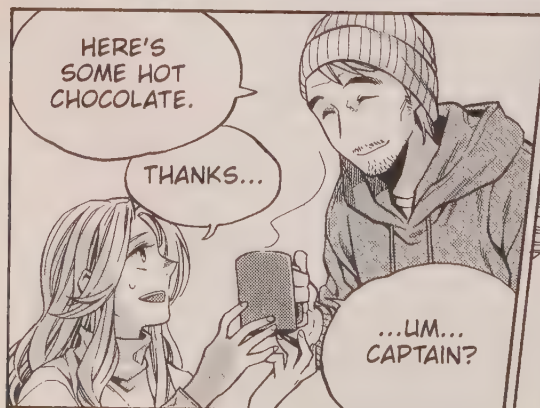
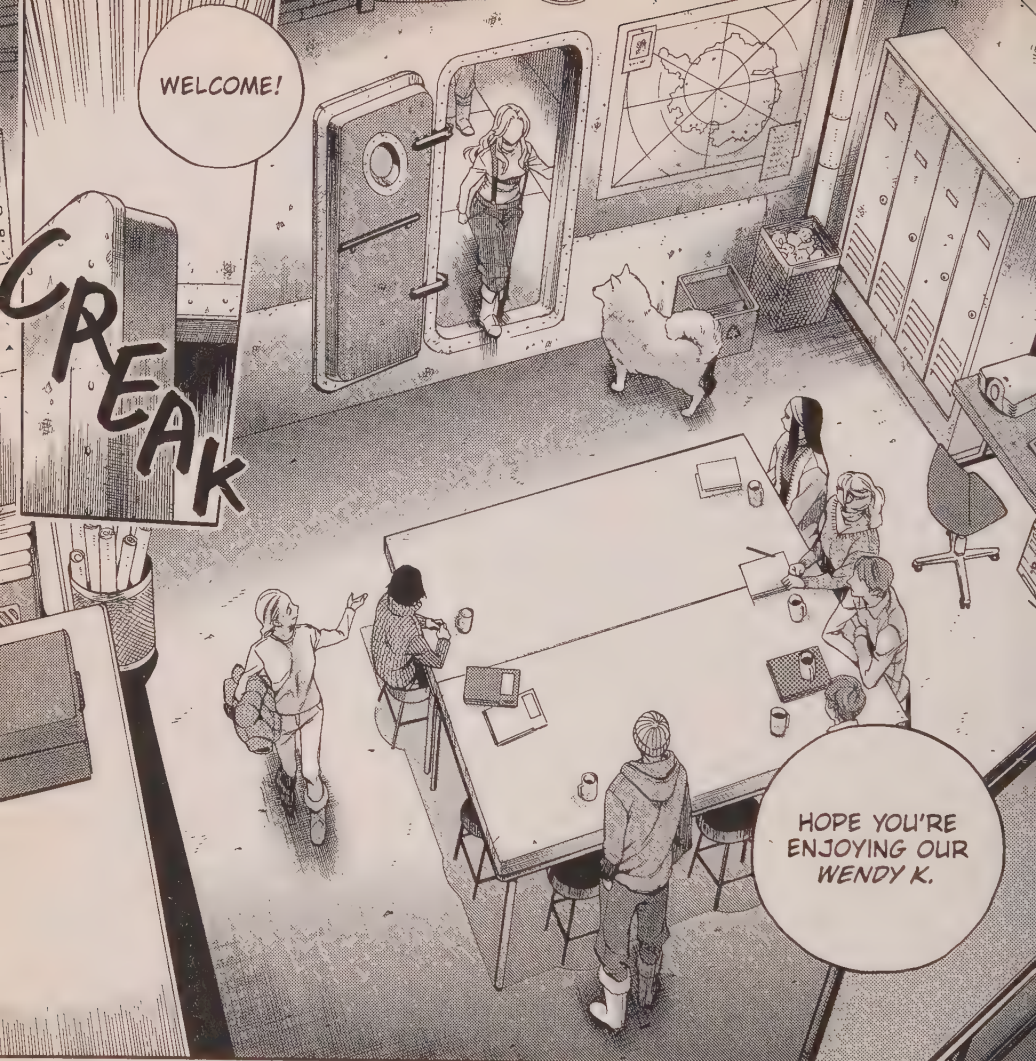
I'LL
INTRODUCE
YOU TO
EVERYONE!

PANT
PANT

WELL,
ALO-HA!
I LOVE
THIS
PLACE!

WHAT'S
UP WITH
HIM?

DASH!





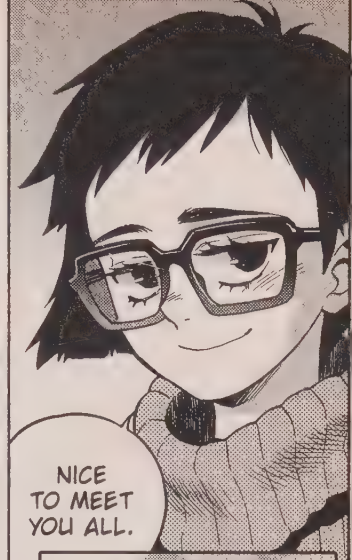
WE'RE
PRETTY
INFORMAL
AROUND
HERE.

MELANIE BONE
COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALIST



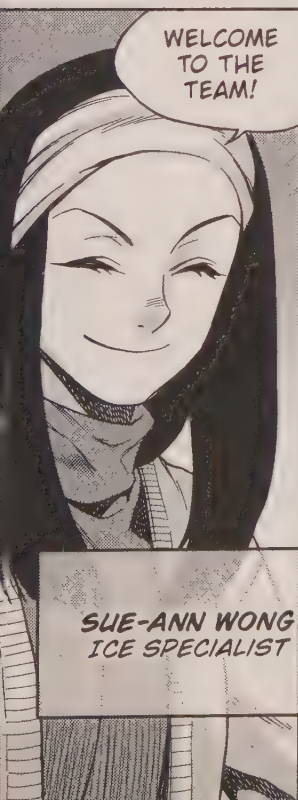
CALL ME
BRIAN
TOO.

BRIAN CAREY
DIVE SPECIALIST



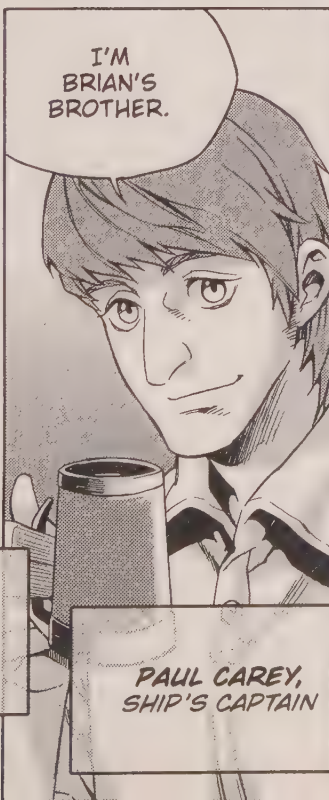
NICE
TO MEET
YOU ALL.

EMILY ROBERTSON
ECO-PALEONTOLOGIST



WELCOME
TO THE
TEAM!

SUE-ANN WONG
ICE SPECIALIST



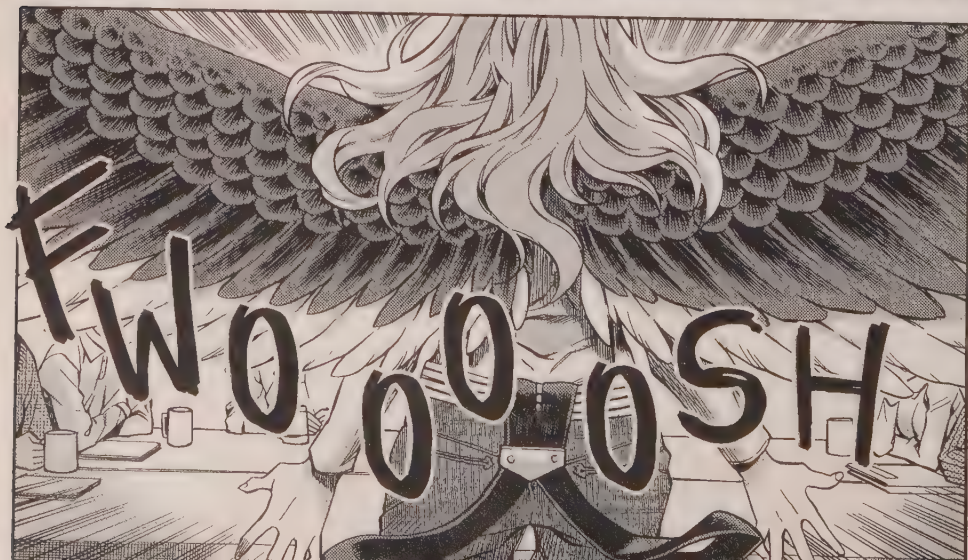
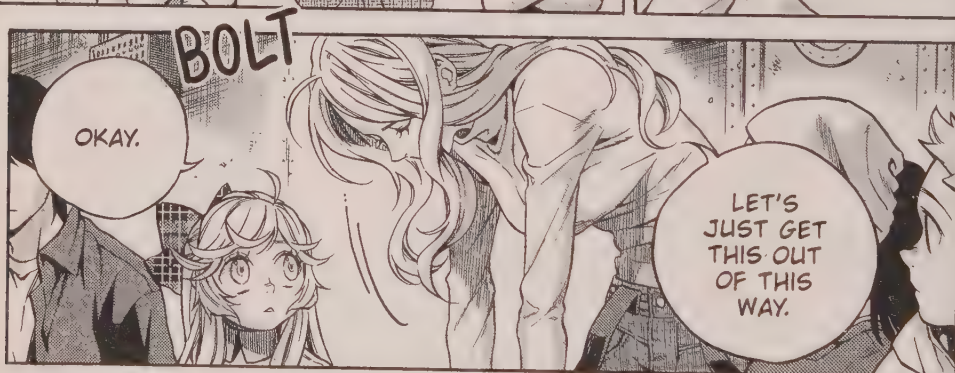
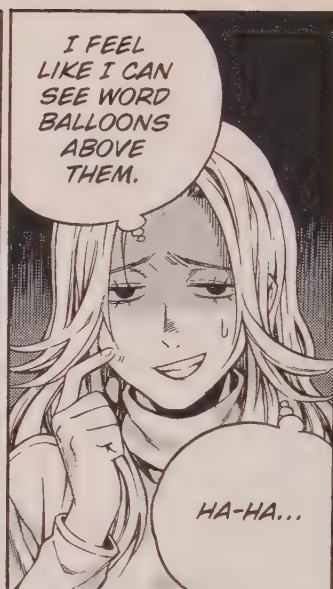
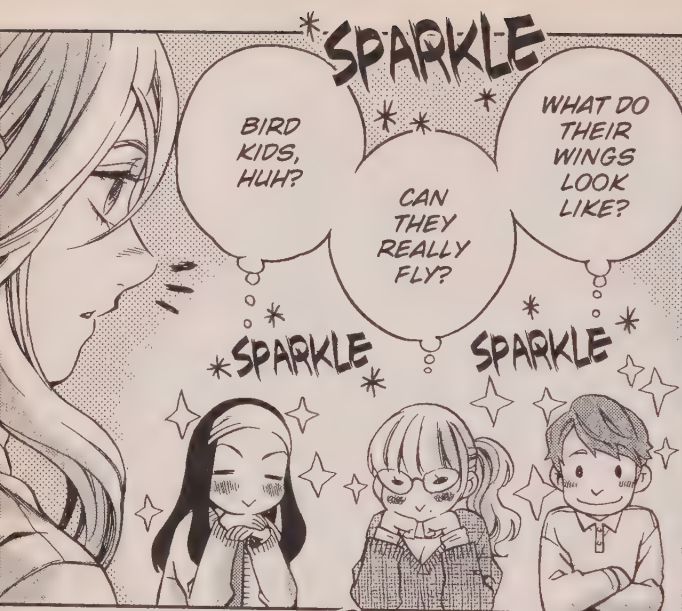
I'M
BRIAN'S
BROTHER.

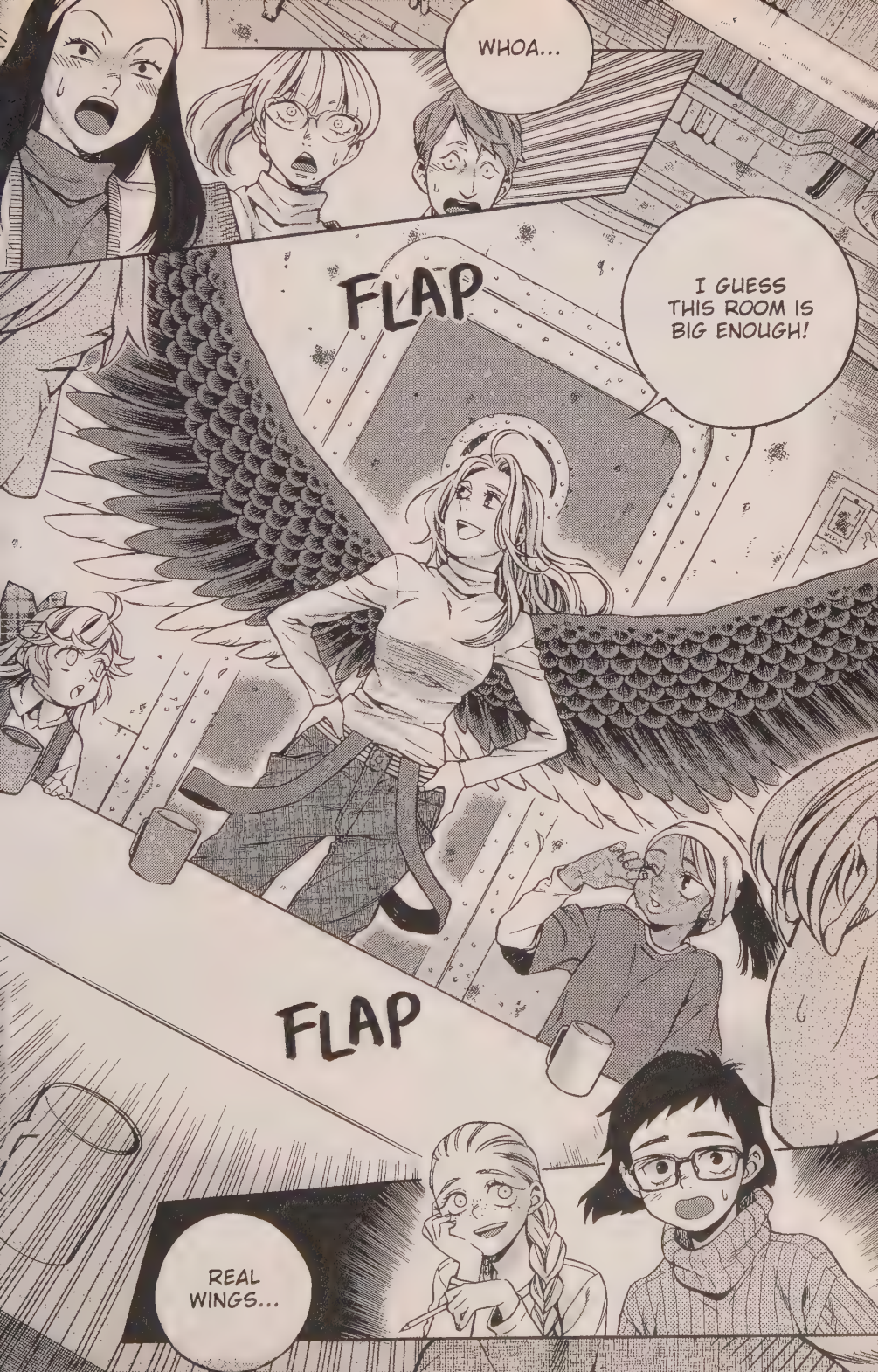
PAUL CAREY,
SHIP'S CAPTAIN



WOOF!

AKILA
RESCUE DOG





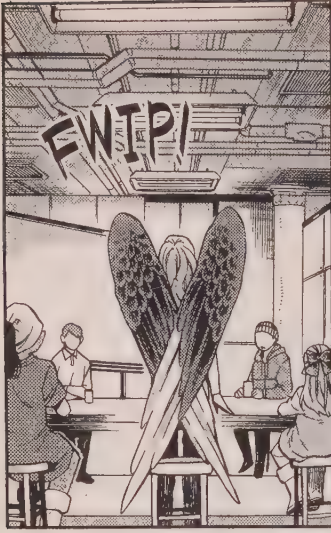
WHOA...

FLAP

I GUESS
THIS ROOM IS
BIG ENOUGH!

FLAP

REAL
WINGS...



SO
THEY'RE NOT
CONNECTED
TO YOUR
ARMS.



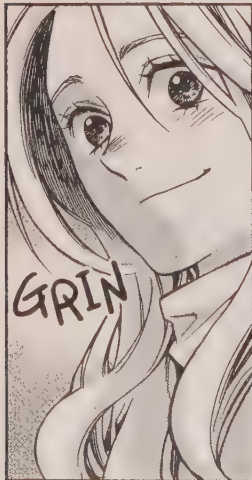
NOPE.
WE HAVE
SIX LIMBS.

LIKE
DRAGONS!

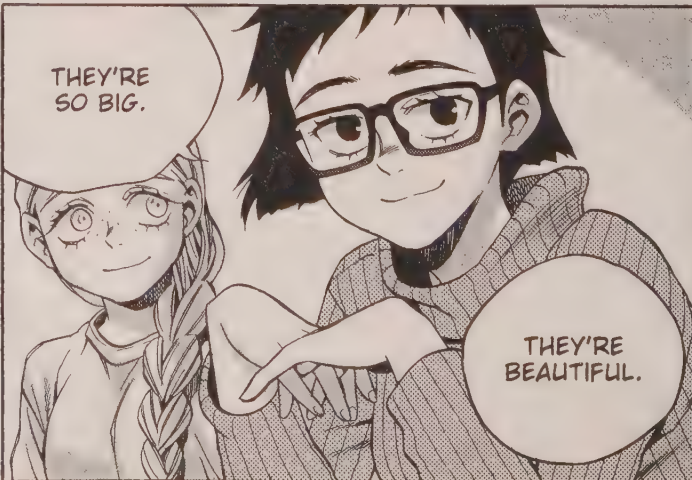
KE-KE

LIKE
INSECTS!

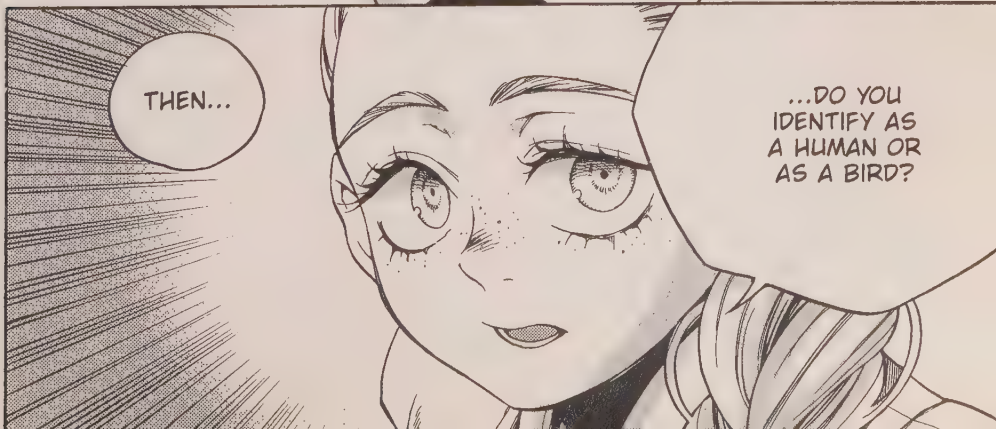
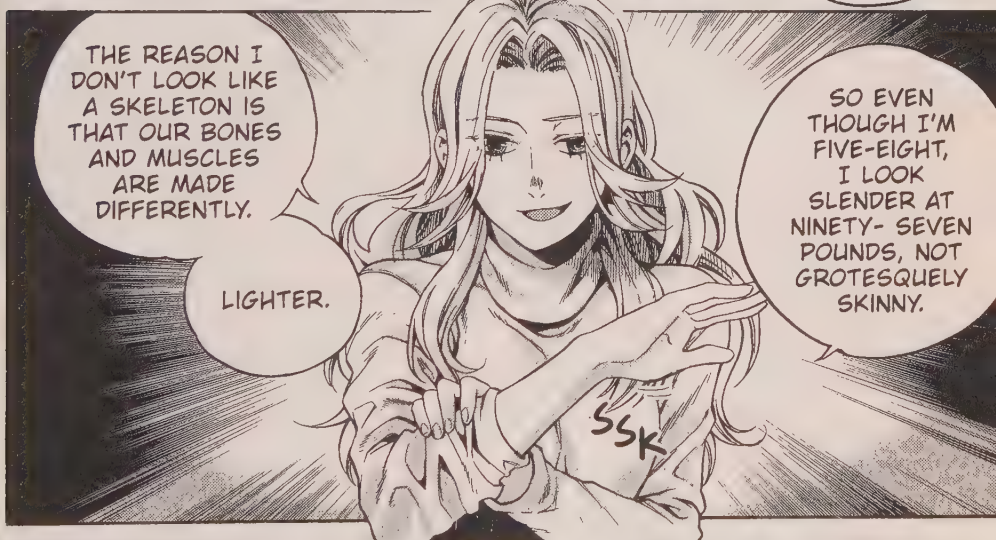
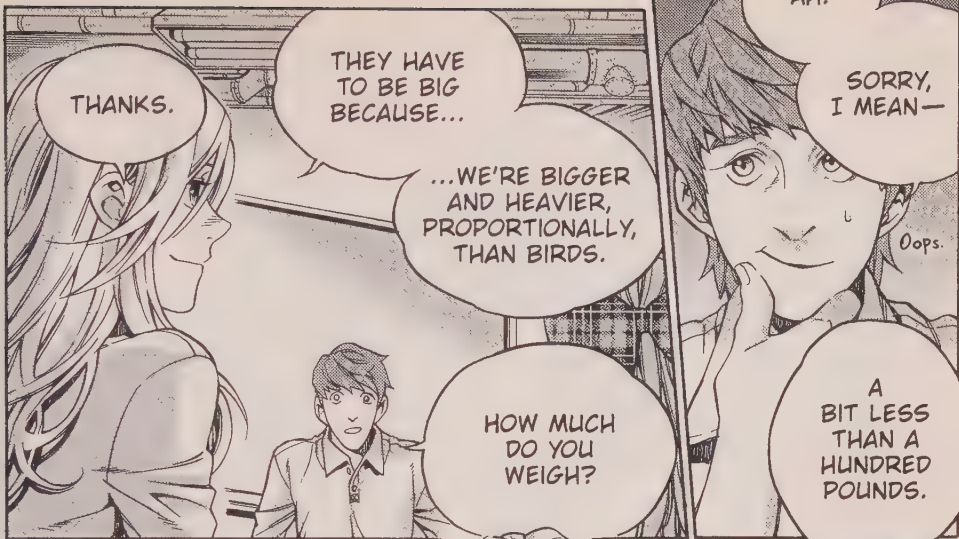
SIT



THEY'RE
SO BIG.



THEY'RE
BEAUTIFUL.





FIDDLE...

I DON'T
KNOW.

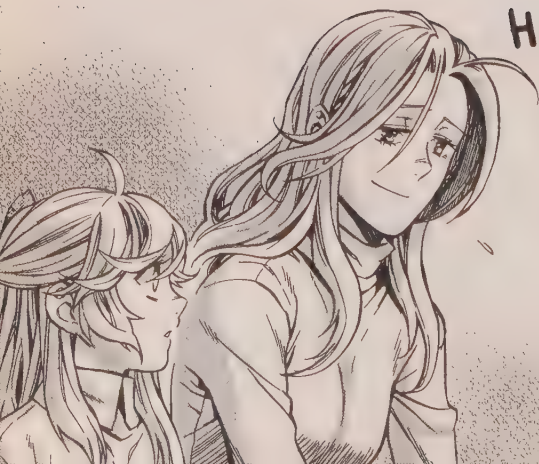
I LOOK IN
THE MIRROR
AND SEE A
GIRL. I HAVE
HANDS AND
FEET.

BUT WHEN
I'M UP IN THE
SKY...I FEEL
MY WINGS
WORKING...

...AND
I KNOW I CAN
GET OXYGEN
OUT OF THIN,
HIGH AIR...

HMM...

...IT
DOESN'T
FEEL VERY...
HUMAN.



I FEEL
MORE HUMAN,
I THINK.

I LIKE
CLOTHES AND
FASHION AND
DOING MY
HAIR.

THE STUFF
I LIKE IS WHAT
KIDS LIKE, WHAT
PEOPLE LIKE.

MUSIC AND
MOVIES AND
READING.

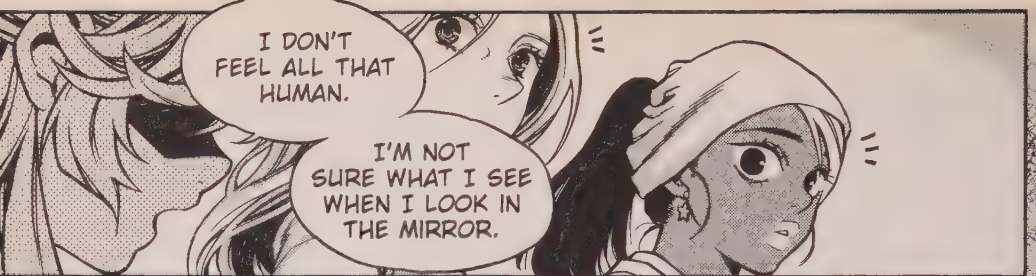
I MEAN...

...I NEVER WANT
TO MAKE A NEST
FOR MYSELF OR
ANYTHING.

WA-
HA-HA

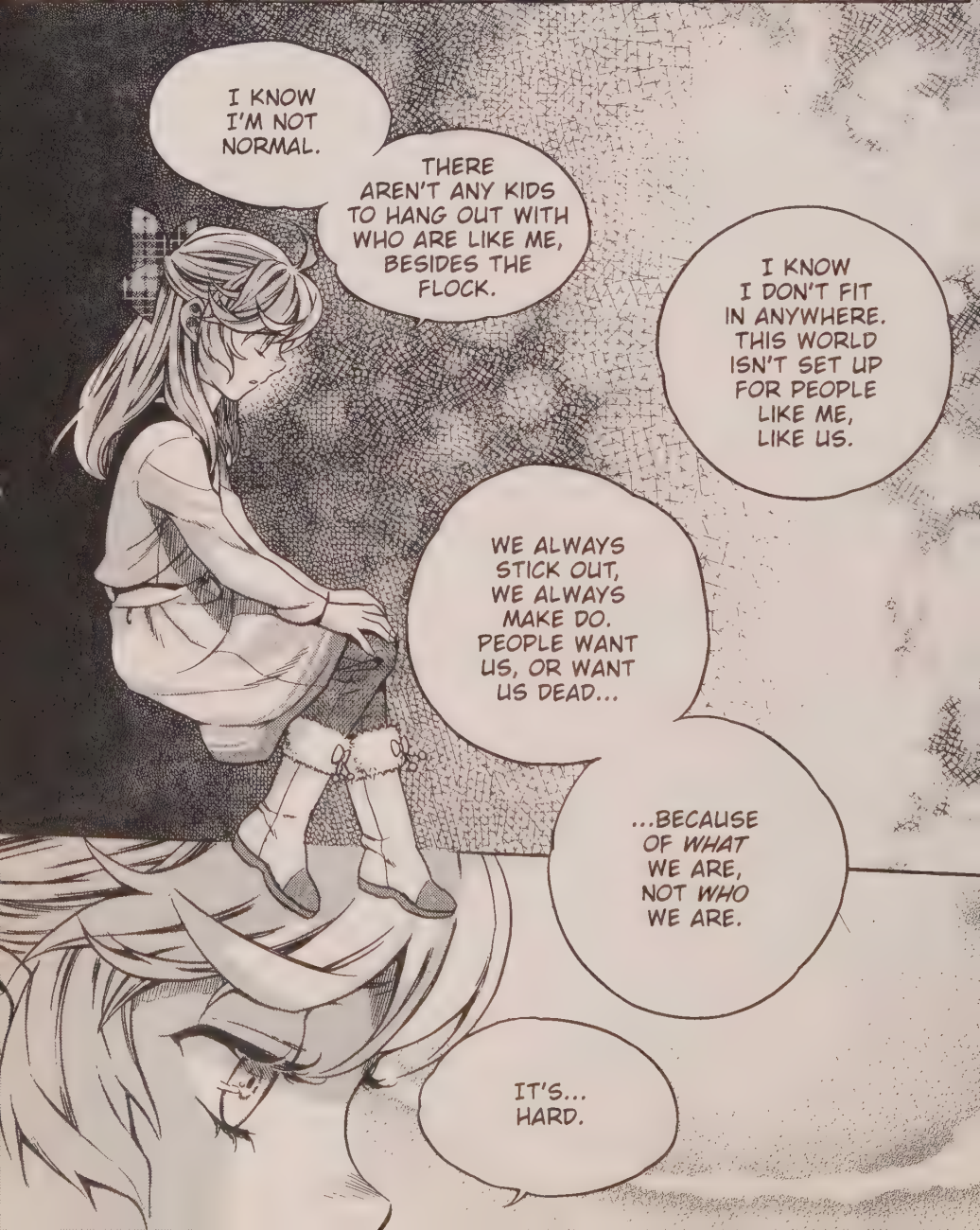
GRIN

EH-HEE-HEE-



I DON'T
FEEL ALL THAT
HUMAN.

I'M NOT
SURE WHAT I SEE
WHEN I LOOK IN
THE MIRROR.



I KNOW
I'M NOT
NORMAL.

THERE
AREN'T ANY KIDS
TO HANG OUT WITH
WHO ARE LIKE ME,
BESIDES THE
FLOCK.

I KNOW
I DON'T FIT
IN ANYWHERE.
THIS WORLD
ISN'T SET UP
FOR PEOPLE
LIKE ME,
LIKE US.

WE ALWAYS
STICK OUT,
WE ALWAYS
MAKE DO.
PEOPLE WANT
US, OR WANT
US DEAD...

...BECAUSE
OF WHAT
WE ARE,
NOT WHO
WE ARE.

IT'S...
HARD.



.....
...SILENT...

ANGEL...

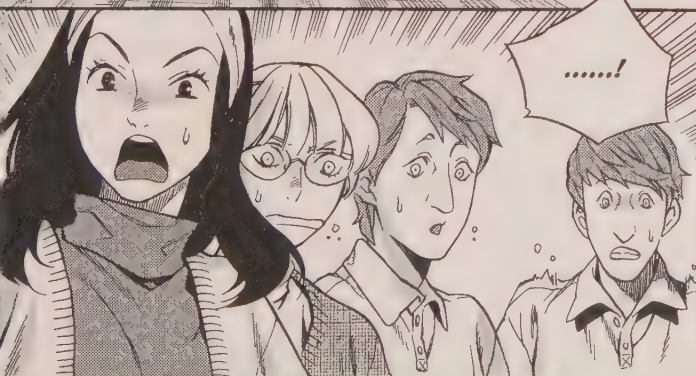
SHUDDER

NOT TO BE
PUSHY...
BUT IT IS
HARD TO BE
STARVING.

TILT

WINK

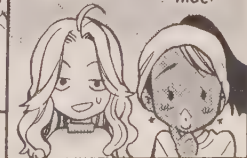
HEY
THERE!



.....!

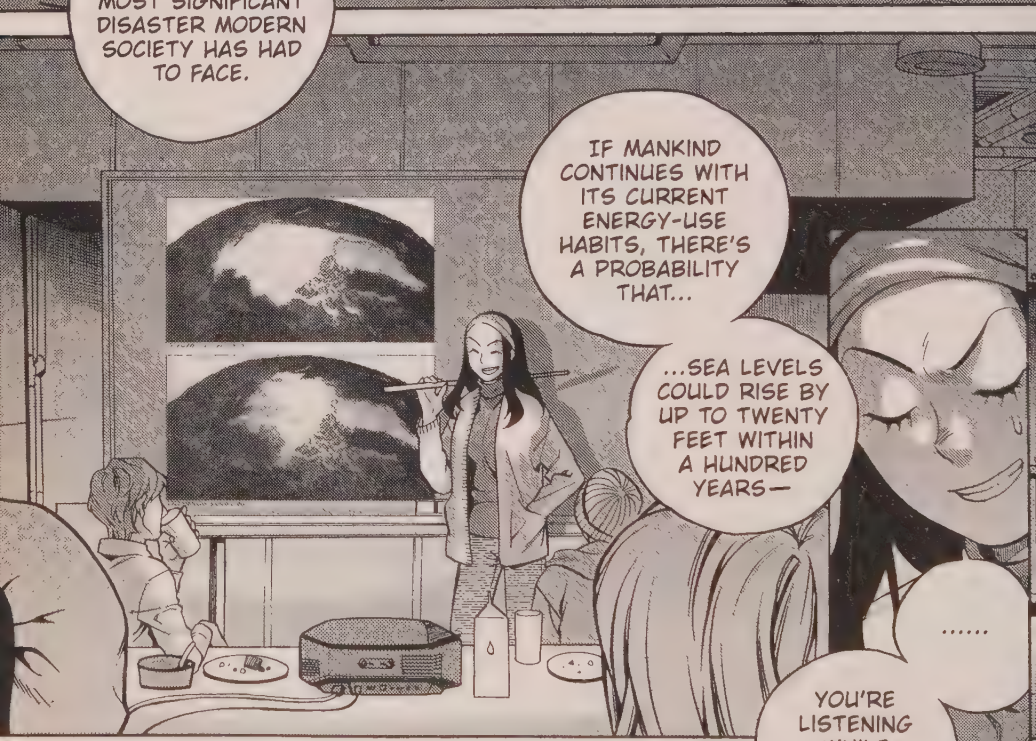
Did they
not know
about
Total?

A
sandwich
would be
nice.





GLOBAL WARMING IS PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISASTER MODERN SOCIETY HAS HAD TO FACE.



IF MANKIND CONTINUES WITH ITS CURRENT ENERGY-USE HABITS, THERE'S A PROBABILITY THAT...

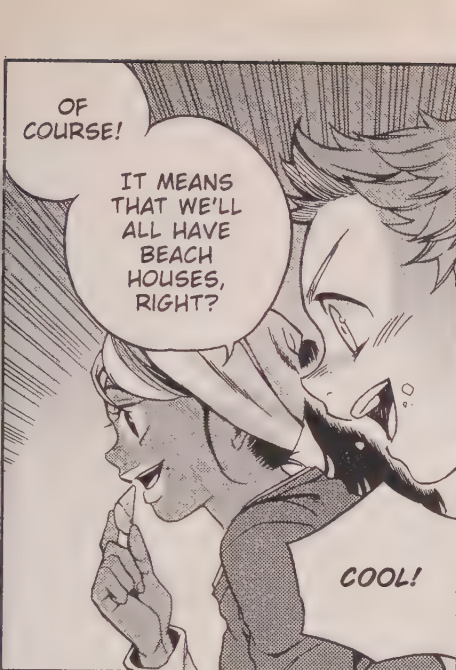
...SEA LEVELS COULD RISE BY UP TO TWENTY FEET WITHIN A HUNDRED YEARS—

YOU'RE LISTENING WHILE YOU'RE EATING, RIGHT?

CHEW
CHEW

NOM
NOM

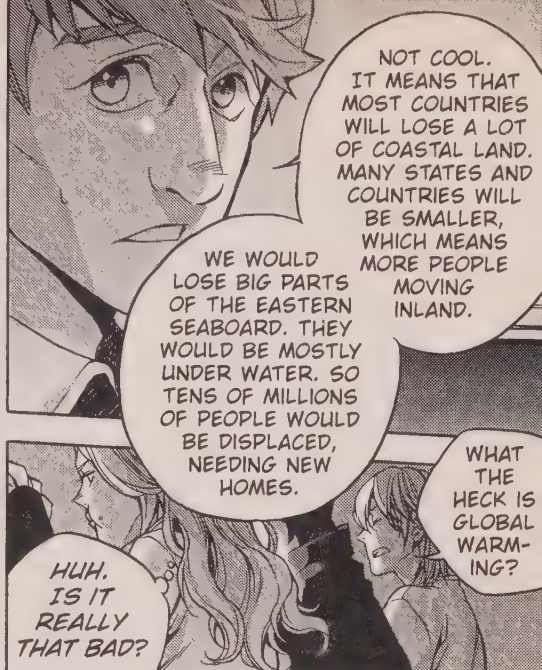
GULP
GULP



OF COURSE!

IT MEANS THAT WE'LL ALL HAVE BEACH HOUSES, RIGHT?

COOL!

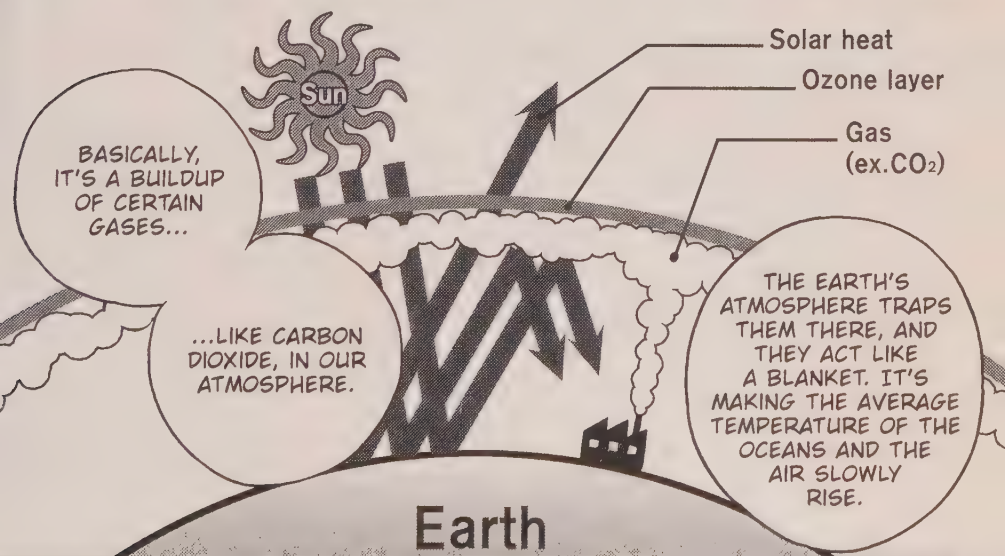


NOT COOL. IT MEANS THAT MOST COUNTRIES WILL LOSE A LOT OF COASTAL LAND. MANY STATES AND COUNTRIES WILL BE SMALLER, WHICH MEANS MORE PEOPLE MOVING INLAND.

WE WOULD LOSE BIG PARTS OF THE EASTERN SEABOARD. THEY WOULD BE MOSTLY UNDER WATER. SO TENS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WOULD BE DISPLACED, NEEDING NEW HOMES.

WHAT THE HECK IS GLOBAL WARMING?

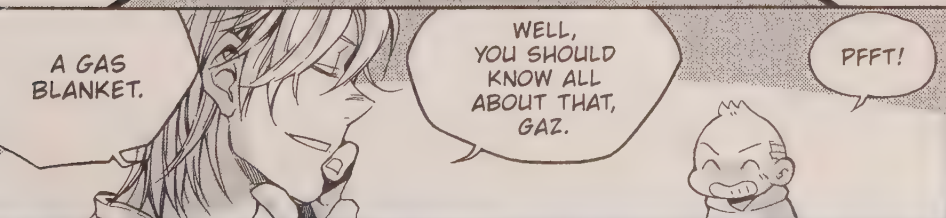
HUH. IS IT REALLY THAT BAD?



BASICALLY, IT'S A BUILDUP OF CERTAIN GASES...

...LIKE CARBON DIOXIDE, IN OUR ATMOSPHERE.

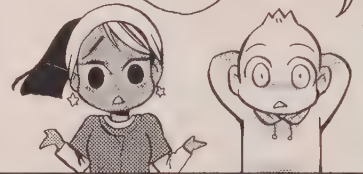
THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE TRAPS THEM THERE, AND THEY ACT LIKE A BLANKET. IT'S MAKING THE AVERAGE TEMPERATURE OF THE OCEANS AND THE AIR SLOWLY RISE.



A GAS BLANKET.

WELL, YOU SHOULD KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT, GAZ.

PFFT!



IT WOULD BE NICE IF THE WORLD WERE A LITTLE WARMER.

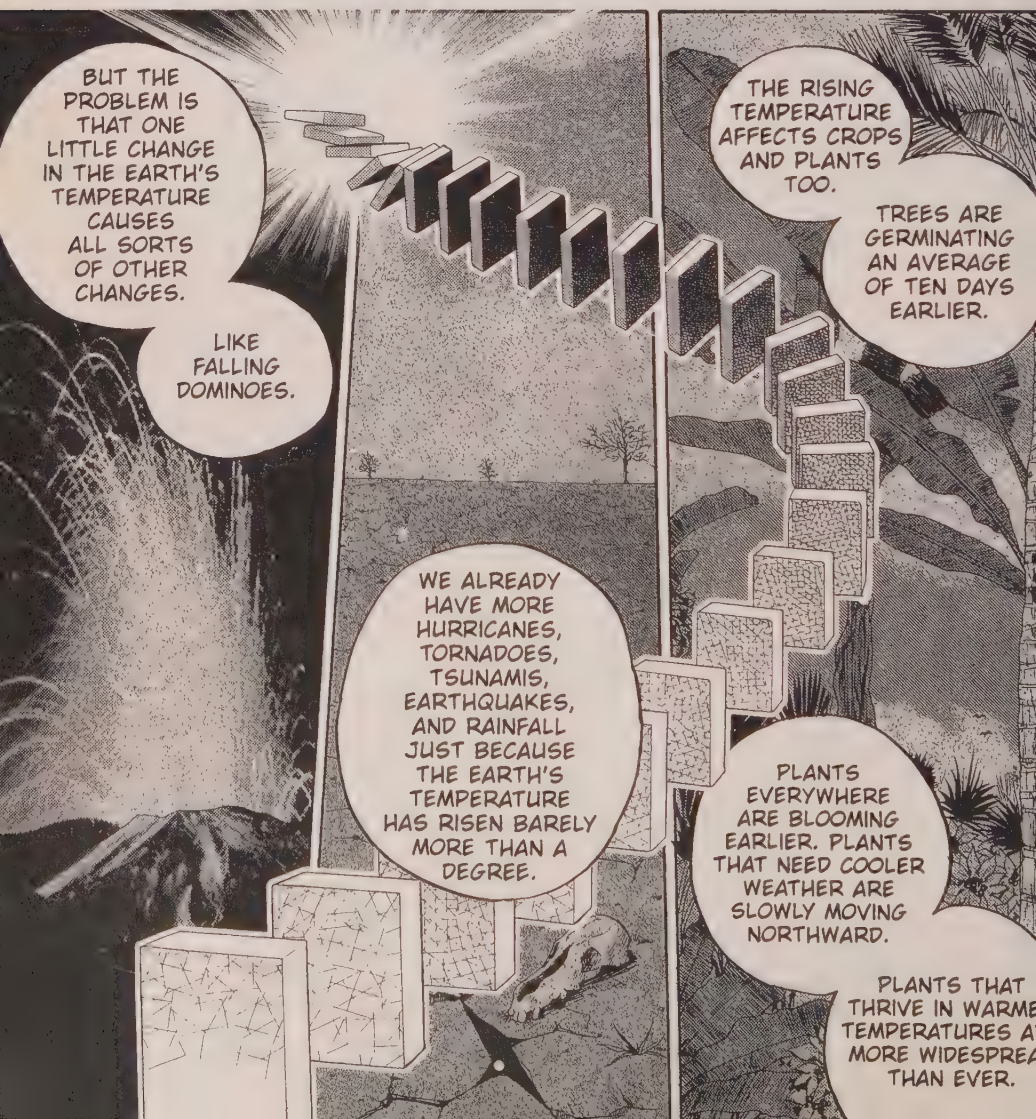
I HATE COLD WEATHER.

YEAH. NO MORE JACKETS, NO MORE FROSTBITE, NO MORE CAR WRECKS ON ICY ROADS. PEOPLE WOULD SAVE MONEY BY NOT HEATING THEIR HOUSES.



IF IT WERE REALLY LIKE THAT, IT MIGHT NOT BE TOO BAD.

THOUGH I LIKE COLD WEATHER AND I WOULD MISS SKIING.



BUT THE PROBLEM IS THAT ONE LITTLE CHANGE IN THE EARTH'S TEMPERATURE CAUSES ALL SORTS OF OTHER CHANGES.

LIKE FALLING DOMINOES.

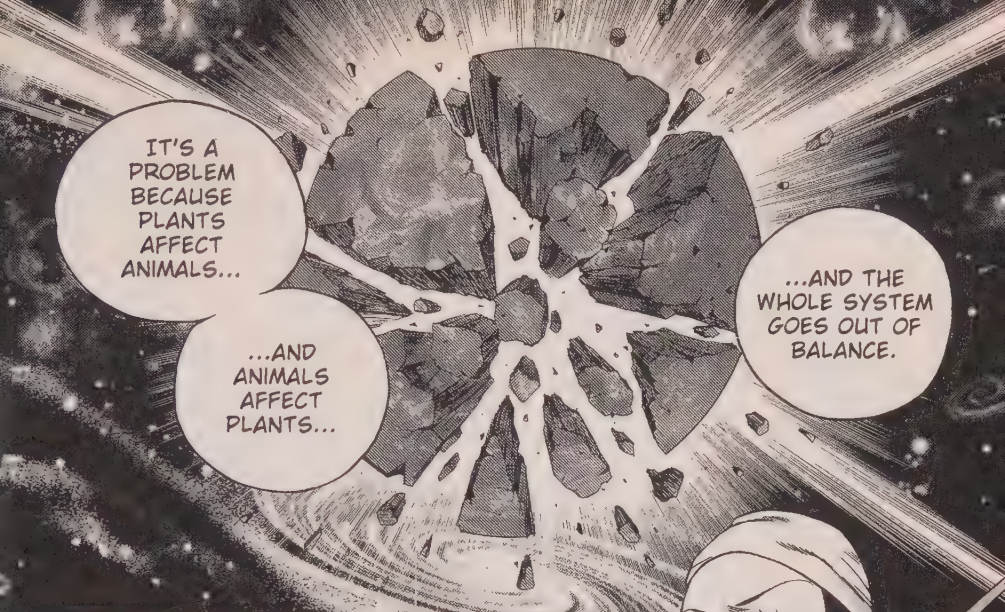
WE ALREADY HAVE MORE HURRICANES, TORNADOES, TSUNAMIS, EARTHQUAKES, AND RAINFALL JUST BECAUSE THE EARTH'S TEMPERATURE HAS RISEN BARELY MORE THAN A DEGREE.

THE RISING TEMPERATURE AFFECTS CROPS AND PLANTS TOO.

TREES ARE GERMINATING AN AVERAGE OF TEN DAYS EARLIER.

PLANTS EVERYWHERE ARE BLOOMING EARLIER. PLANTS THAT NEED COOLER WEATHER ARE SLOWLY MOVING NORTHWARD.

PLANTS THAT THRIVE IN WARMER TEMPERATURES ARE MORE WIDESPREAD THAN EVER.



IT'S A
PROBLEM
BECAUSE
PLANTS
AFFECT
ANIMALS...

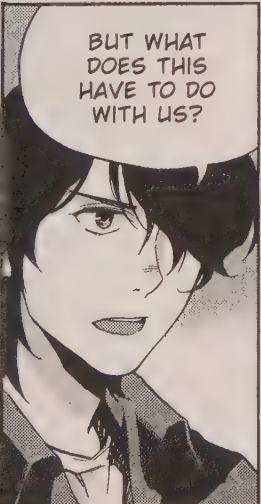
...AND
ANIMALS
AFFECT
PLANTS...

...AND THE
WHOLE SYSTEM
GOES OUT OF
BALANCE.



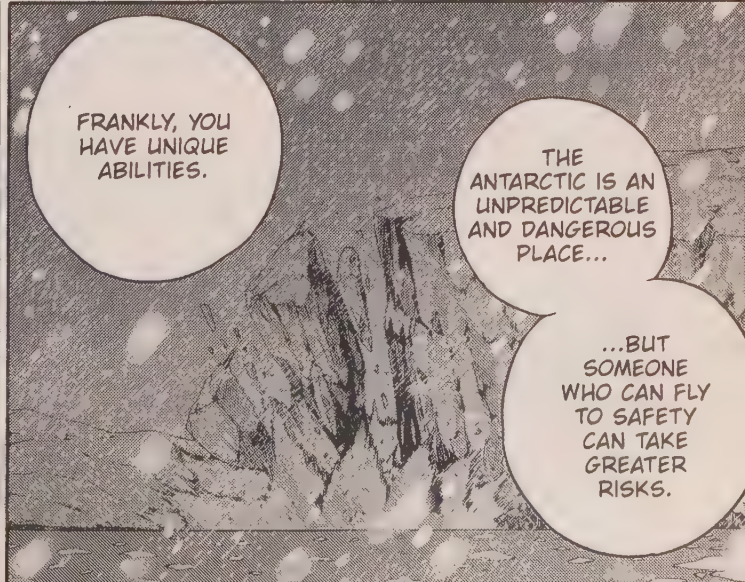
SCIENTISTS ESTIMATE
THAT AT LEAST TWO
HUNDRED SIXTY
DIFFERENT SPECIES
ARE ALREADY
RESPONDING TO
GLOBAL WARMING
BY CHANGING THEIR
MIGRATION AND
REPRODUCTION
PATTERNS.

THE LOSS OF
PLANT AND
ANIMAL LIFE
CAN'T BE
CALCULATED.



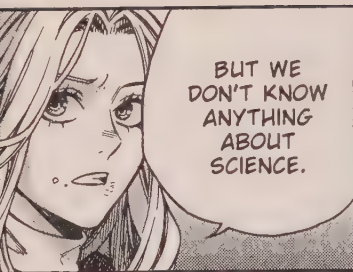
BUT WHAT
DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO
WITH US?

FRANKLY, YOU
HAVE UNIQUE
ABILITIES.

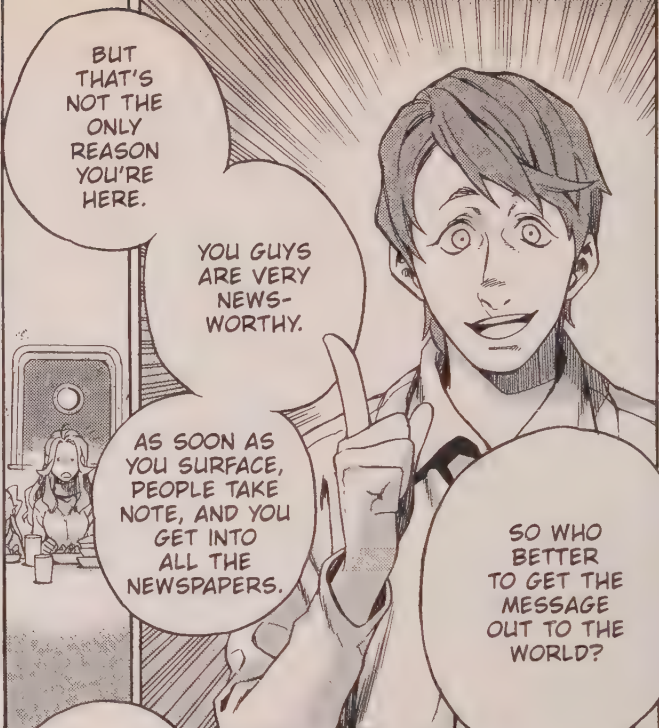


THE
ANTARCTIC IS AN
UNPREDICTABLE
AND DANGEROUS
PLACE...

...BUT
SOMEONE
WHO CAN FLY
TO SAFETY
CAN TAKE
GREATER
RISKS.



BUT WE
DON'T KNOW
ANYTHING
ABOUT
SCIENCE.

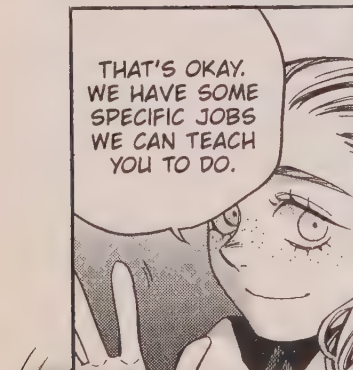


BUT
THAT'S
NOT THE
ONLY
REASON
YOU'RE
HERE.

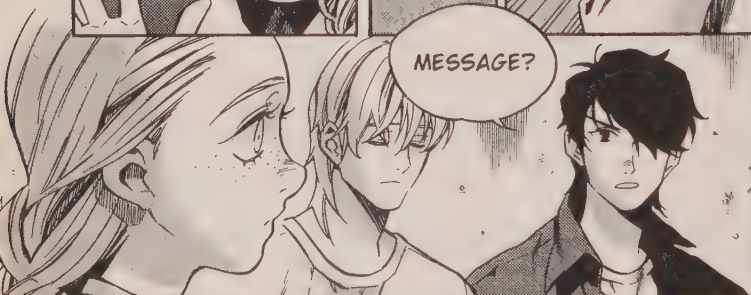
YOU GUYS
ARE VERY
NEWS-
WORTHY.

AS SOON AS
YOU SURFACE,
PEOPLE TAKE
NOTE, AND YOU
GET INTO
ALL THE
NEWSPAPERS.

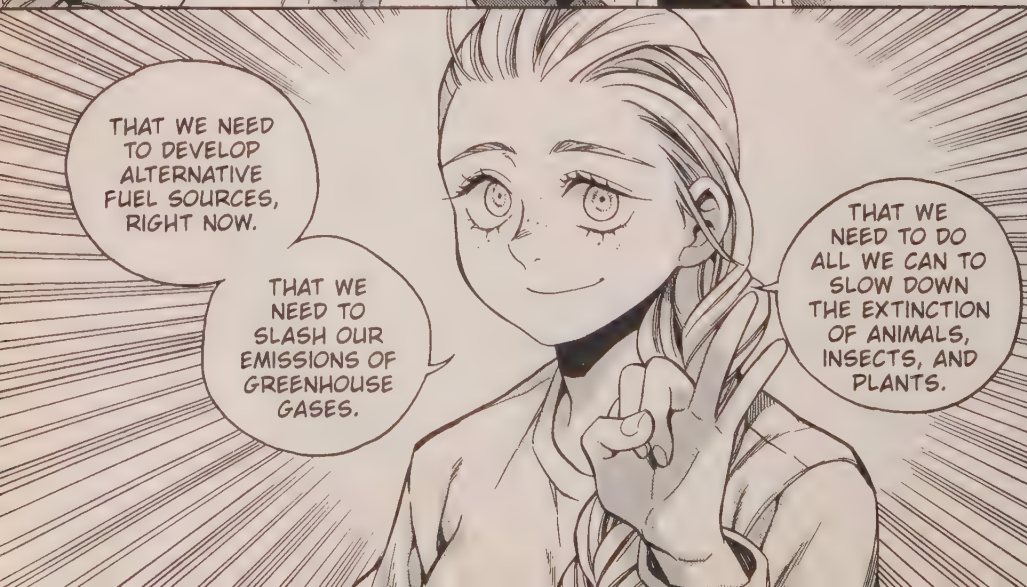
SO WHO
BETTER
TO GET THE
MESSAGE
OUT TO THE
WORLD?



THAT'S OKAY.
WE HAVE SOME
SPECIFIC JOBS
WE CAN TEACH
YOU TO DO.



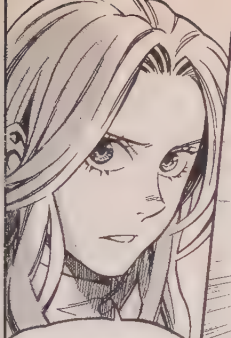
MESSAGE?



THAT WE NEED
TO DEVELOP
ALTERNATIVE
FUEL SOURCES,
RIGHT NOW.

THAT WE
NEED TO
SLASH OUR
EMISSIONS OF
GREENHOUSE
GASES.

THAT WE
NEED TO DO
ALL WE CAN TO
SLOW DOWN
THE EXTINCTION
OF ANIMALS,
INSECTS, AND
PLANTS.



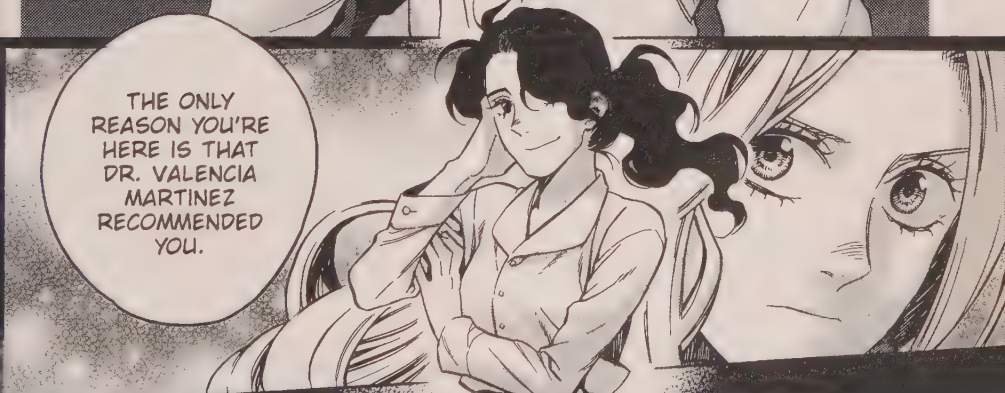
WHAT IF
WE DON'T
BELIEVE ALL
THAT STUFF?



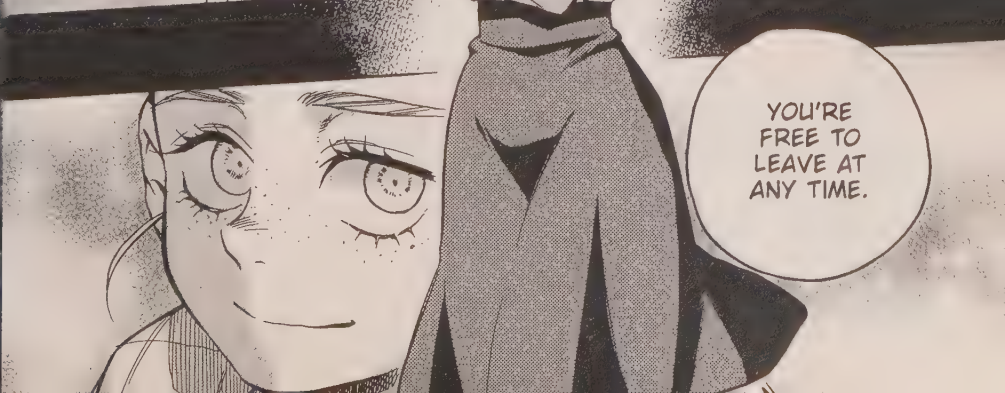
YOU
CAN
LEAVE.

IF, AFTER
WORKING WITH
US, YOU DON'T
THINK WHAT
WE'RE DOING IS
WORTHWHILE...

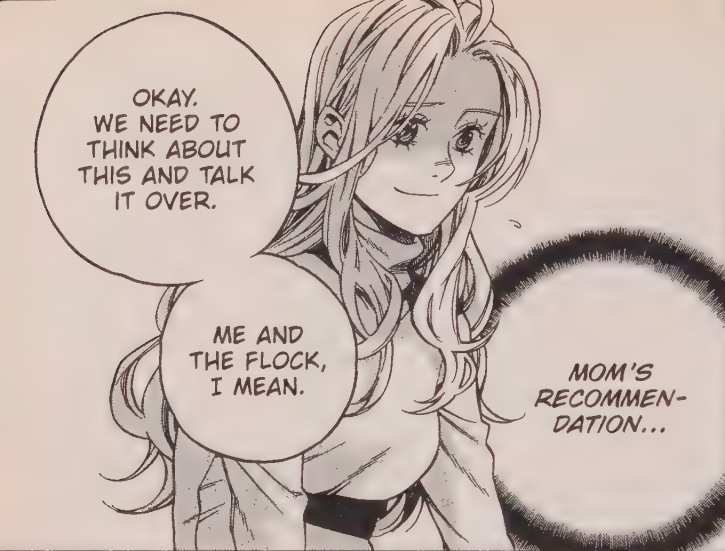
...THEN
YOU'RE FREE
TO LEAVE, AND
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO PUBLICIZE
OUR CAUSE.



THE ONLY
REASON YOU'RE
HERE IS THAT
DR. VALENCIA
MARTINEZ
RECOMMENDED
YOU.



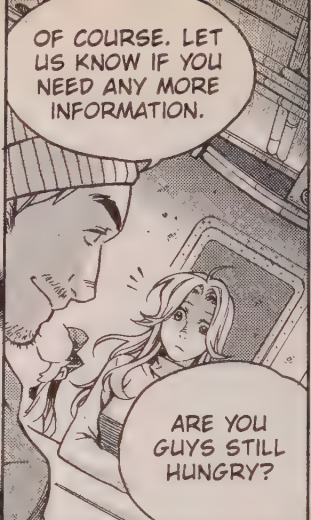
YOU'RE
FREE TO
LEAVE AT
ANY TIME.



OKAY.
WE NEED TO
THINK ABOUT
THIS AND TALK
IT OVER.

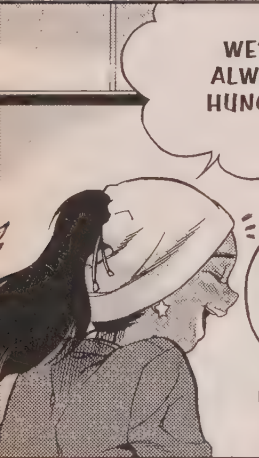
ME AND
THE FLOCK,
I MEAN.

MOM'S
RECOMMEN-
DATION...



OF COURSE. LET
US KNOW IF YOU
NEED ANY MORE
INFORMATION.

ARE YOU
GUYS STILL
HUNGRY?



WE'RE
ALWAYS
HUNGRY!

WE NEED
BETWEEN THREE
THOUSAND AND
FOUR THOUSAND
CALORIES
A DAY.

WHEN IT'S
WARM.



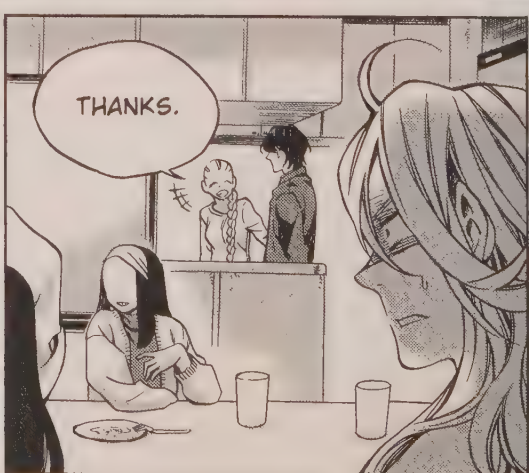
UM, WELL,
LET'S SEE
WHAT WE CAN
RUSTLE UP.

BOLT



I'LL
HELP
YOU.

BOLT



THANKS.

TAP

SORRY.

IT'S A
BIT TIGHT
IN HERE,
ISN'T IT?

IT'S
OKAY.

.....
YOU'RE
YOUNG
TO BE A
DOCTOR.

SORT OF WHIZZED
THROUGH M.I.T.,
THEN GOT MY
DOCTORATE AT THE
U OF ARIZONA.

I'M
TWENTY-
ONE.

IN A WAY,
I UNDERSTAND
WHAT IT FEELS
LIKE TO STICK OUT,
TO BE DIFFERENT
FROM EVERYONE
ELSE.

I FINISHED
HIGH SCHOOL
WHEN I WAS
TWELVE.

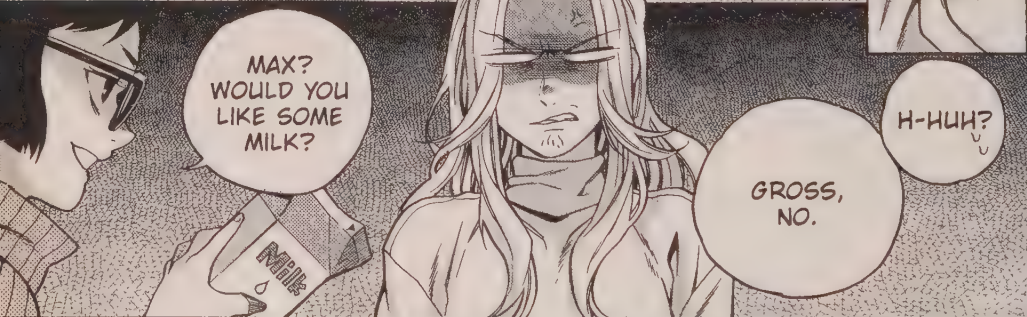
PEOPLE
CALLED ME
A FREAK.

EVEN MY
PARENTS DIDN'T
KNOW WHAT TO
DO WITH ME.



THAT MUST
HAVE BEEN
ROUGH.

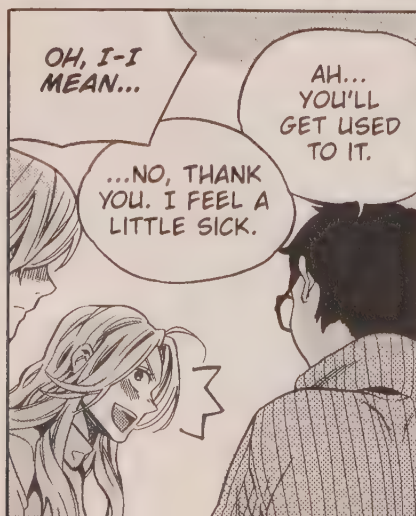
YEAH...



MAX?
WOULD YOU
LIKE SOME
MILK?

H-HUH?

GROSS,
NO.



OH, I-I
MEAN...

AH...
YOU'LL
GET USED
TO IT.

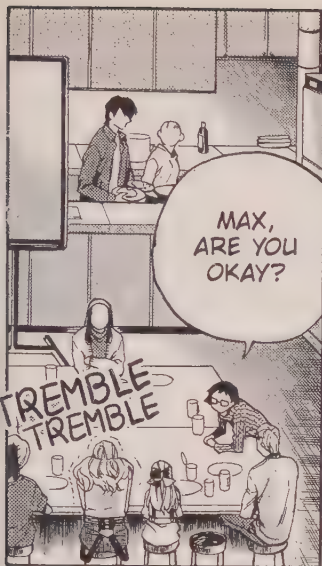
...NO, THANK
YOU. I FEEL A
LITTLE SICK.



So, that's
when we...

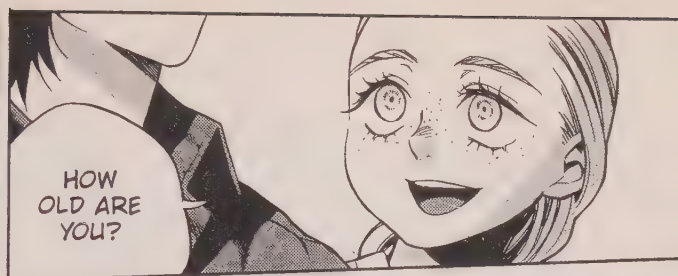
AH-HA-HA

CRACK!!



MAX,
ARE YOU
OKAY?

TREMBLE
TREMBLE

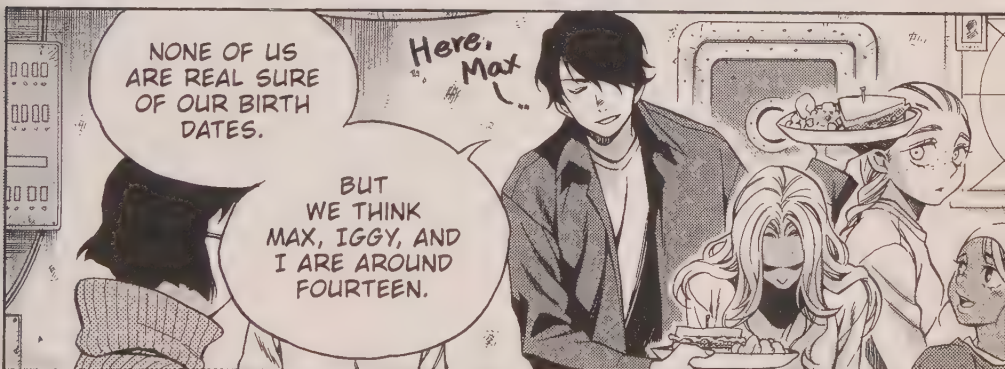


HOW
OLD ARE
YOU?



FOURTEEN.

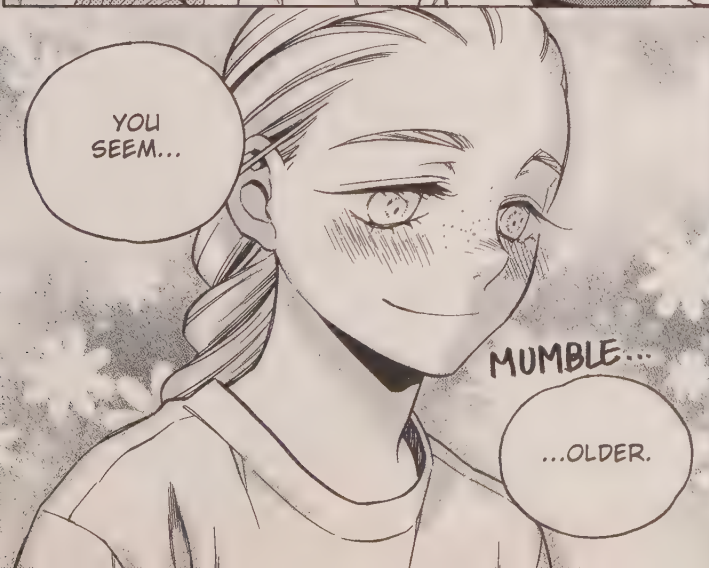
I THINK.



NONE OF US
ARE REAL SURE
OF OUR BIRTH
DATES.

Here,
Max!

BUT
WE THINK
MAX, IGGY, AND
I ARE AROUND
FOURTEEN.

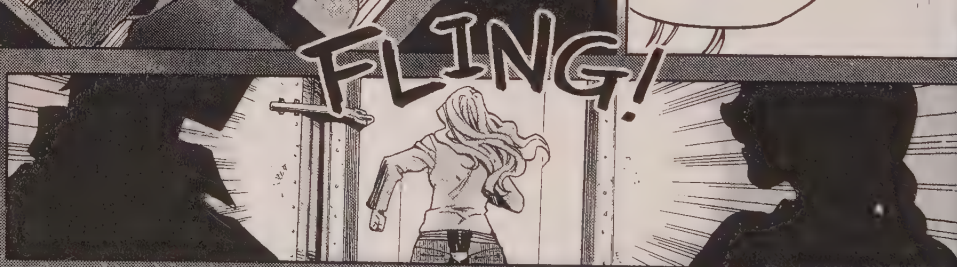
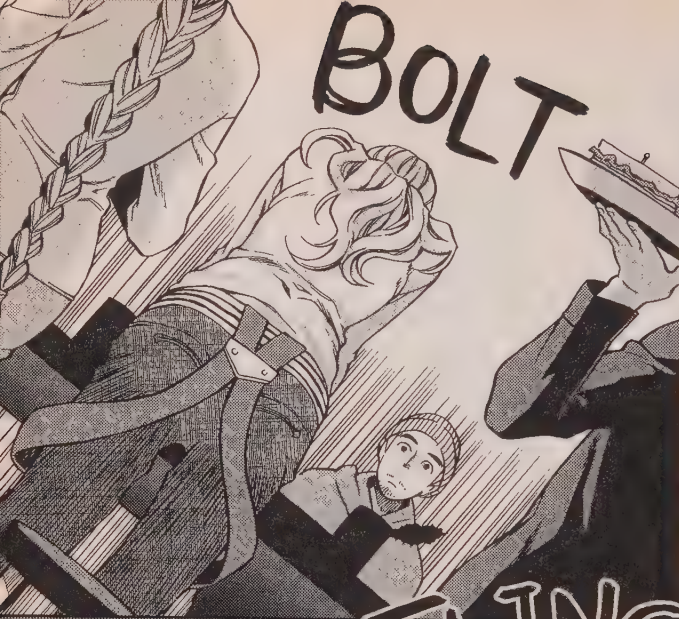


YOU
SEEM...

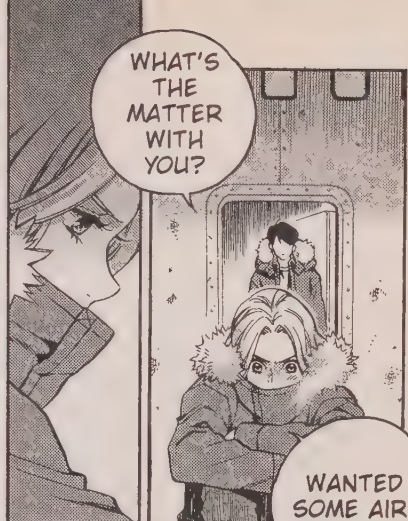
MUMBLE...

...OLDER.





...**SLAM**



WHAT'S
THE
MATTER
WITH
YOU?

WANTED
SOME AIR.

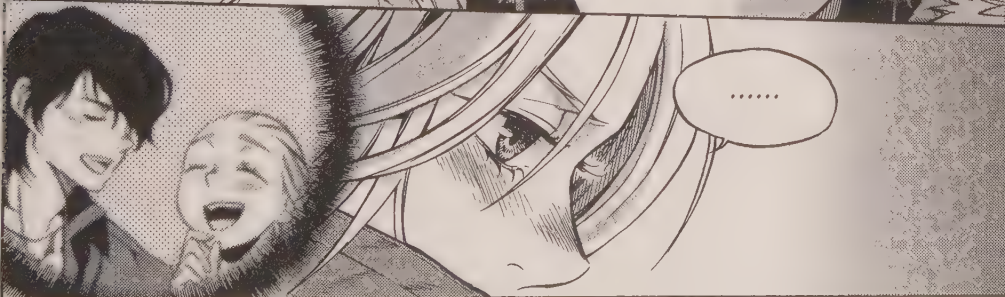


TELL ME
WHAT'S
GOING
ON.

NOTHING.



MAX, IF YOU
WOULD JUST
TALK TO
ME—



.....

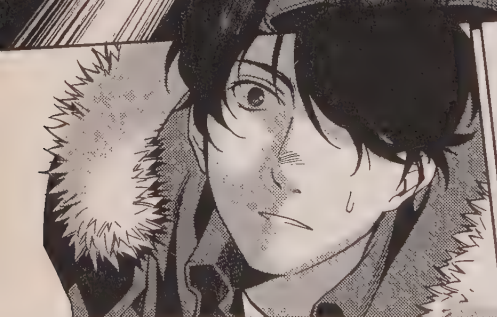


ABOUT
WHAT?
YOU AND
ME?

A close-up of Bolt, a young man with dark hair, looking slightly to the side with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark jacket with a fur-lined hood. Next to him is a blonde character, also in a fur-lined hood, looking towards Bolt. The background is dark and indistinct.

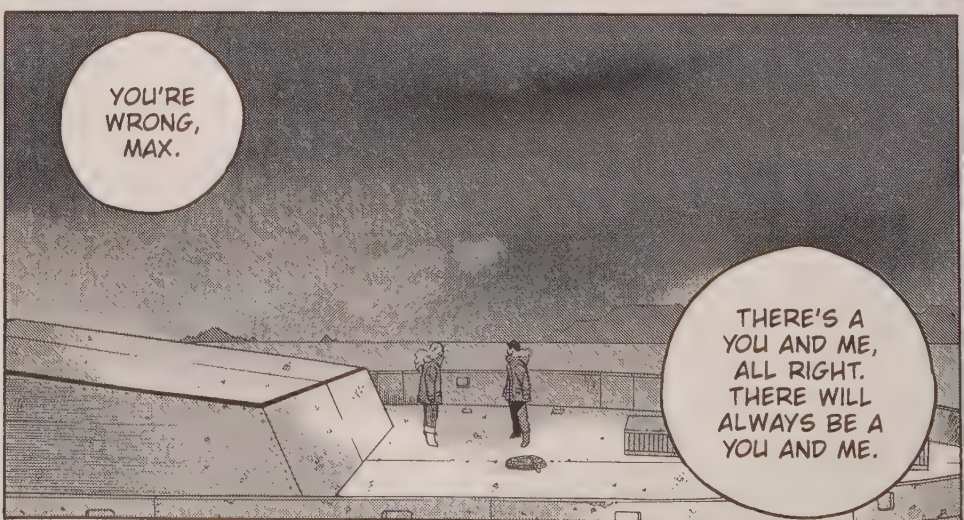
THERE IS NO
YOU AND ME.
ESPECIALLY
WHEN YOU KEEP
THROWING
YOURSELF AT
EVERYTHING
IN A SKIRT!

BOLT



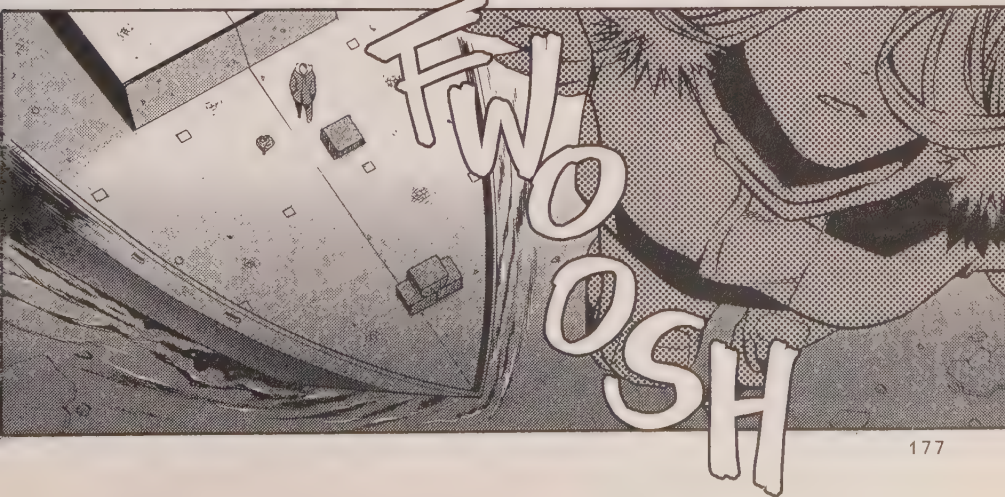
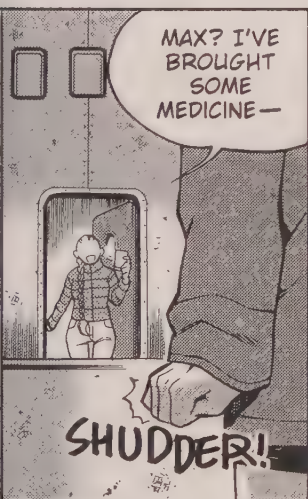
A close-up of Bolt's face. He has a serious, almost stoic expression. A single drop of sweat is visible on his forehead. He is wearing the same dark jacket with a fur-lined hood.

YOU'RE
WRONG,
MAX.



A wide shot of Bolt and the blonde character standing on a rooftop. Bolt is on the left, looking towards the blonde character on the right. The rooftop has some debris and a low wall. In the background, there are buildings and a cloudy sky.

THERE'S A
YOU AND ME,
ALL RIGHT.
THERE WILL
ALWAYS BE A
YOU AND ME.



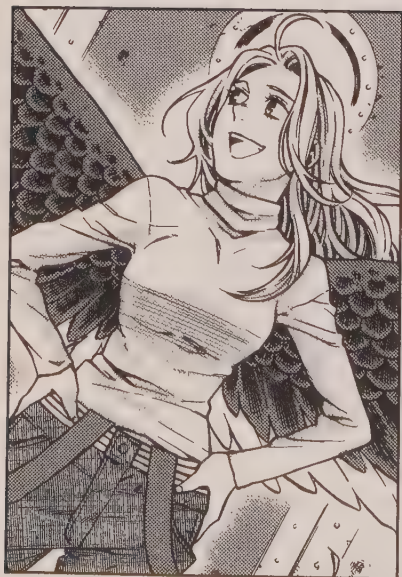


BA-DUMP

BA-DUMP

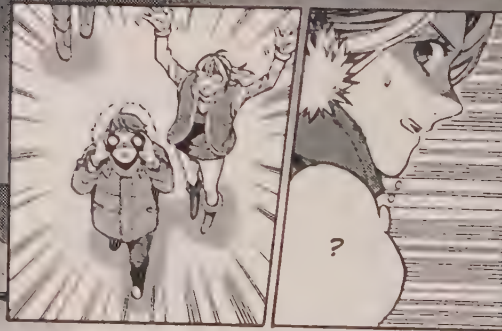
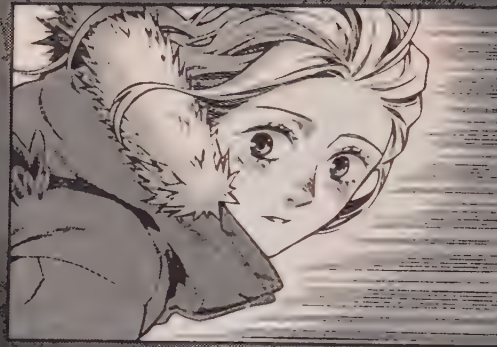
THERE WILL
ALWAYS BE A
YOU AND ME.

MAXIMUM
RIDE





MAXIMUM
RIDE
CHAPTER 45





WHAT'S
UP?

TAP



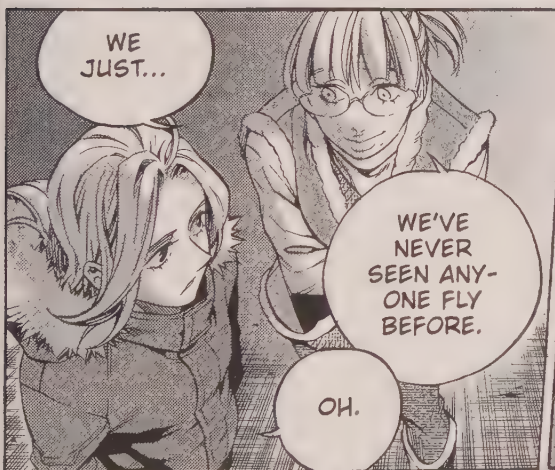
WE WERE
JUST...

...
WATCH-
ING.



IS SOMETHING
WRONG?

NO, NO,
NOTHING'S
WRONG.



WE
JUST...

WE'VE
NEVER
SEEN ANY-
ONE FLY
BEFORE.

OH.



IS IT...
WONDER-
FUL?



.....



YES.
THE FLYING
PART IS
WONDERFUL.

NOD

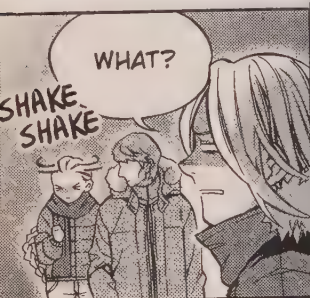
BETTER
THAN ANY-
THING.

GROWING
UP IN DOG
CRATES, BEING
CHASED AND
ATTACKED EVERY
TIME WE TURNED
AROUND? NOT
SO MUCH.



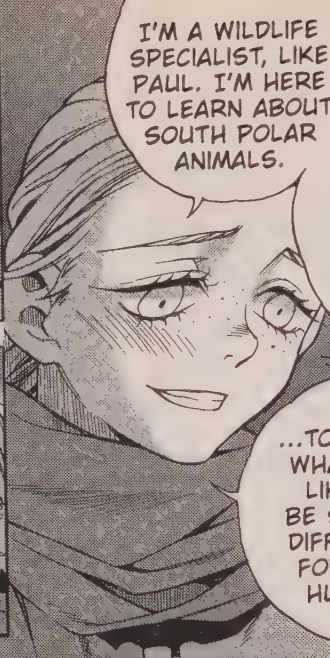
I WISH—

MUMBLE...



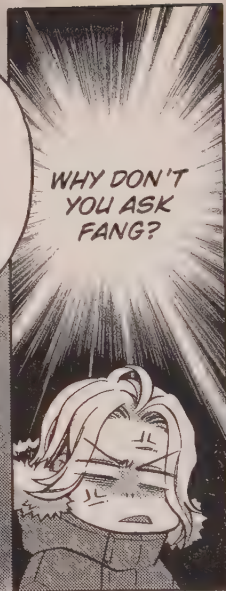
WHAT?

SHAKE
SHAKE



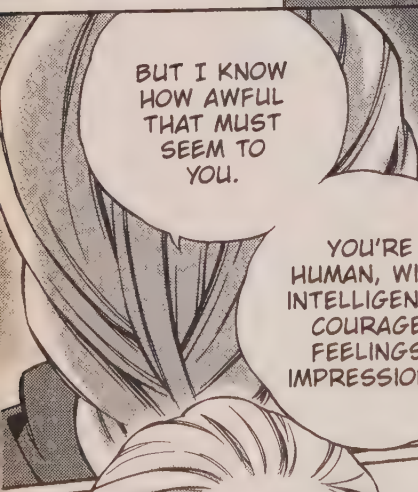
I'M A WILDLIFE
SPECIALIST, LIKE
PAUL. I'M HERE
TO LEARN ABOUT
SOUTH POLAR
ANIMALS.

THE
SCIENTIST
IN ME IS
DYING TO
ASK YOU
QUESTIONS...



WHY DON'T
YOU ASK
FANG?

...TO LEARN
WHAT IT'S
LIKE TO
BE SUCH A
DIFFERENT
FORM OF
HUMAN.



BUT I KNOW
HOW AWFUL
THAT MUST
SEEM TO
YOU.

YOU'RE
HUMAN, WITH
INTELLIGENCE,
COURAGE,
FEELINGS,
IMPRESSIONS.

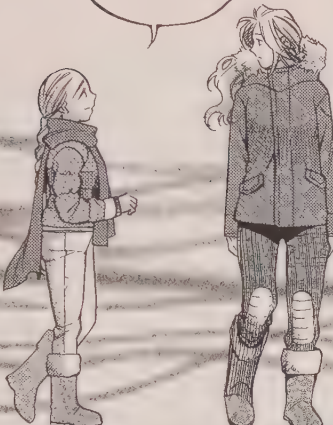


!

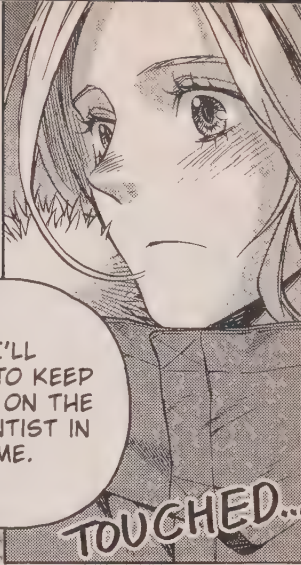


I CAN'T ASK
A BIRD HOW
IT FEELS
TO FLY. I
CAN ASK
YOU.

BUT YOUR
VERY ABILITY
TO TELL ME
MEANS THAT
ASKING YOU SUCH
A THING WOULD
BE HORRIBLY
INTRUSIVE AND
INSENSITIVE ON
MY PART.



I'M SORRY.

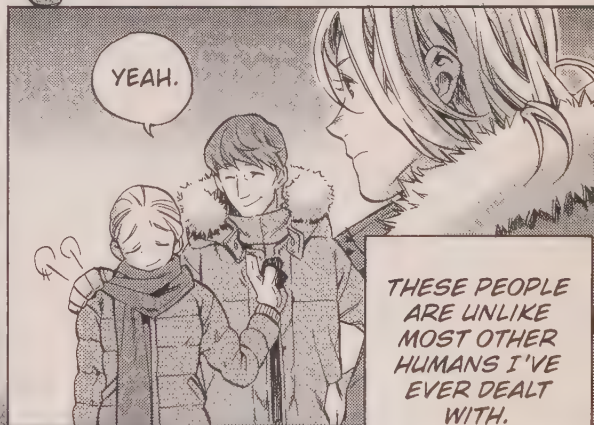


I'LL
TRY TO KEEP
A LID ON THE
SCIENTIST IN
ME.

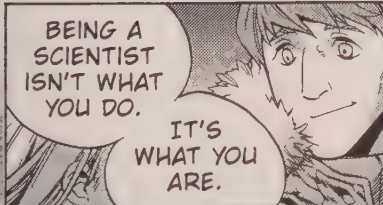
TOUCHED...



GOOD
LUCK WITH
THAT.



YEAH.



BEING A
SCIENTIST
ISN'T WHAT
YOU DO.

IT'S
WHAT YOU
ARE.

THESE PEOPLE
ARE UNLIKE
MOST OTHER
HUMANS I'VE
EVER DEALT
WITH.

THEY ARE
JUST AS
CURIOUS...

...BUT THEY
ARE ACTUALLY
RESPECTING
OUR PERSONAL
BOUNDARIES.

CREAK

MAX, THIS
IS GREAT!

MAX!!

THIS IS WAY
BETTER THAN
GOING TO SCHOOL.
OR BEING ON THE
RUN.

IT'S LIKE WE HAVE
SOMETHING FUN TO
DO, PLUS WE HAVE
PEOPLE PROTECTING
US, PLUS FOOD AND
BEDS, ALL AT THE
SAME TIME!

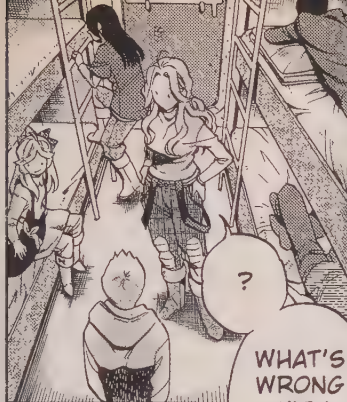
AND
WE HAVE A REAL
MISSION, AND
IT'S A GOOD
MISSION!

YOU
THINK?

IT'S PRETTY
COOL, DESPITE
BEING COOPED
UP LIKE
SARDINES IN
THIS CAN.

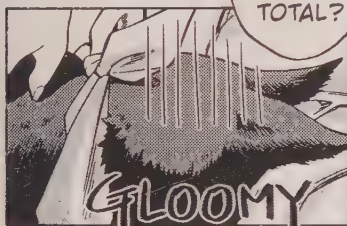
IT STILL
MAKES SENSE.
I'D LIKE TO DO
SOME ACTUAL
GOOD...

...INSTEAD OF
JUST TRYING
TO THWART BAD
ALL THE TIME.

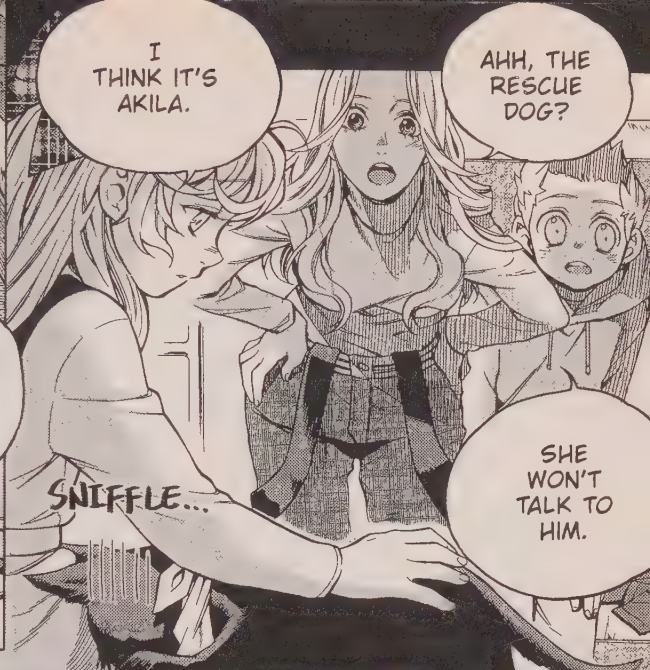


?

WHAT'S
WRONG
WITH
TOTAL?



GLOOMY

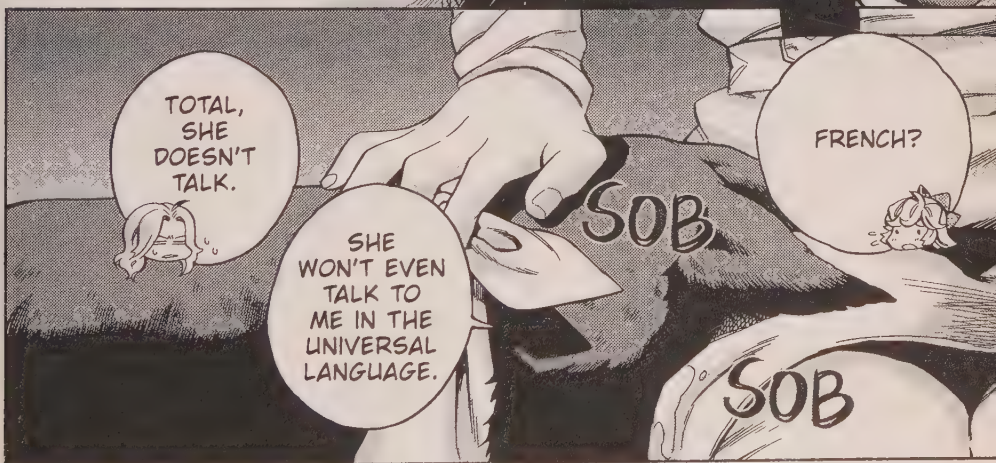


I
THINK IT'S
AKILA.

AHH, THE
RESCUE
DOG?

SNIFFLE...

SHE
WON'T
TALK TO
HIM.



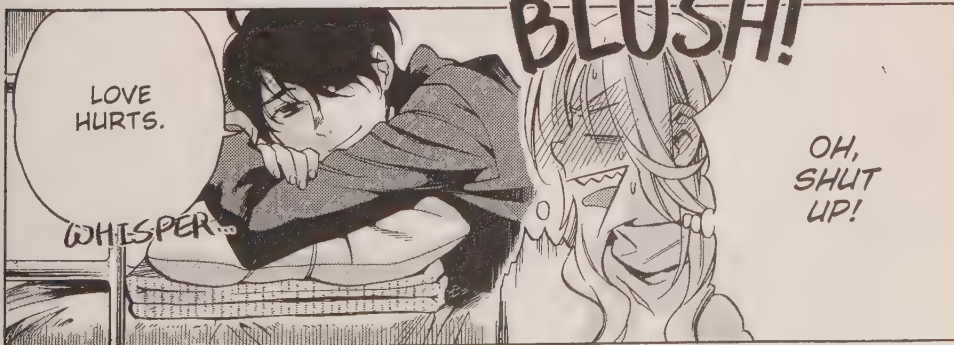
TOTAL,
SHE
DOESN'T
TALK.

FRENCH?

SHE
WON'T EVEN
TALK TO
ME IN THE
UNIVERSAL
LANGUAGE.

SOB

SOB

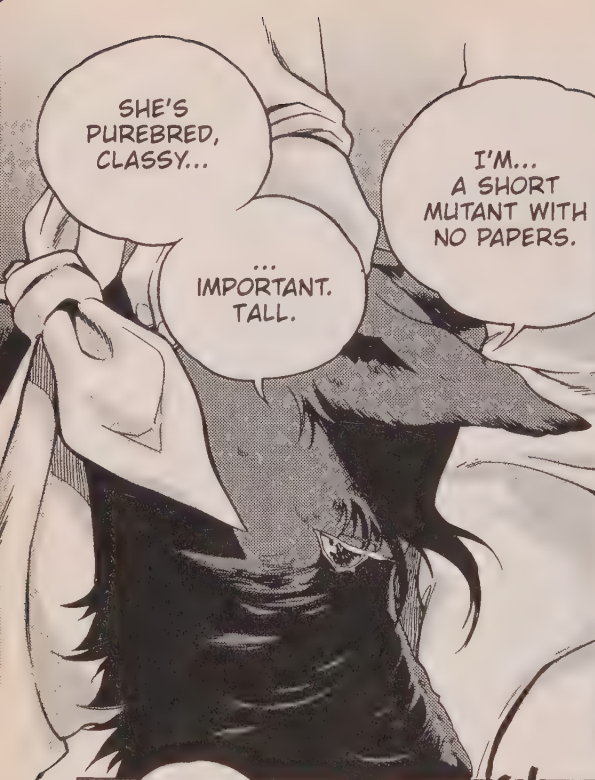


LOVE
HURTS.

WHISPER...

BLUSH!

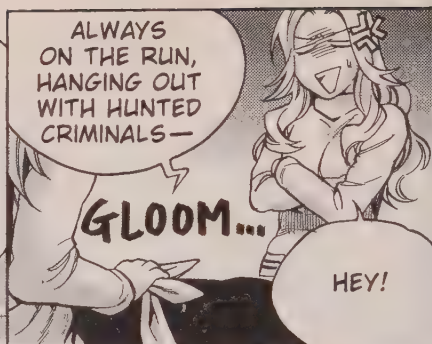
OH,
SHUT
UP!



SHE'S
PUREBRED,
CLASSY...

...
IMPORTANT.
TALL.

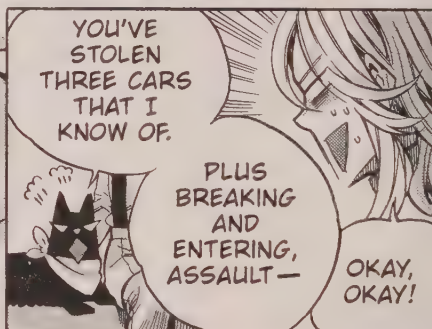
I'M...
A SHORT
MUTANT WITH
NO PAPERS.



ALWAYS
ON THE RUN,
HANGING OUT
WITH HUNTED
CRIMINALS—

GLOOM...

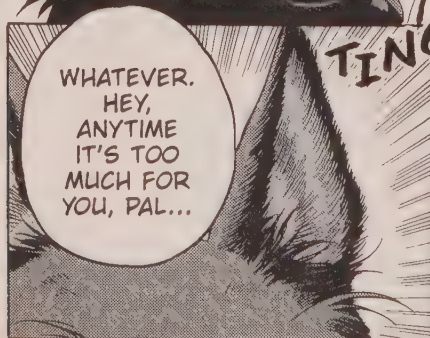
HEY!



YOU'VE
STOLEN
THREE CARS
THAT I
KNOW OF.

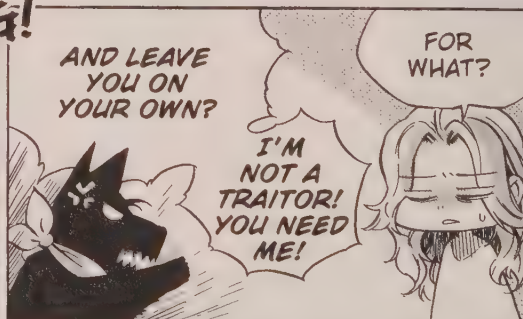
PLUS
BREAKING
AND
ENTERING,
ASSAULT—

OKAY,
OKAY!



WHATEVER.
HEY,
ANYTIME
IT'S TOO
MUCH FOR
YOU, PAL...

TING!



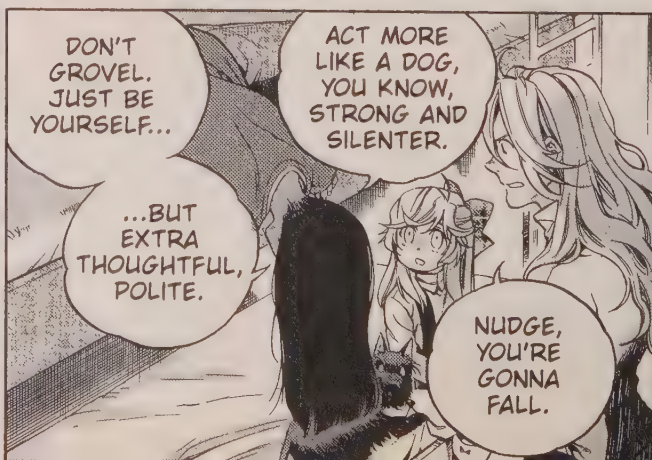
AND LEAVE
YOU ON
YOUR OWN?

FOR
WHAT?

I'M
NOT A
TRAITOR!
YOU NEED
ME!



TOTAL,
JUST BE
NICE TO
AKILA.



DON'T
GROVEL.
JUST BE
YOURSELF...

ACT MORE
LIKE A DOG,
YOU KNOW,
STRONG AND
SILENTER.

...BUT
EXTRA
THOUGHTFUL,
POLITE.

NUDGE,
YOU'RE
GONNA
FALL.

MAX!

FWIP

I'M ALL
FOR THE
MISSION! I
MEAN, IT'S COLD
HERE, WHICH
SUCKS...

...BUT I
LIKE THESE
PEOPLE. I
SAY WE
STAY FOR A
WHILE!

ME TOO!

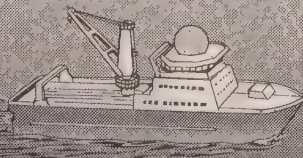
ME
TOO!

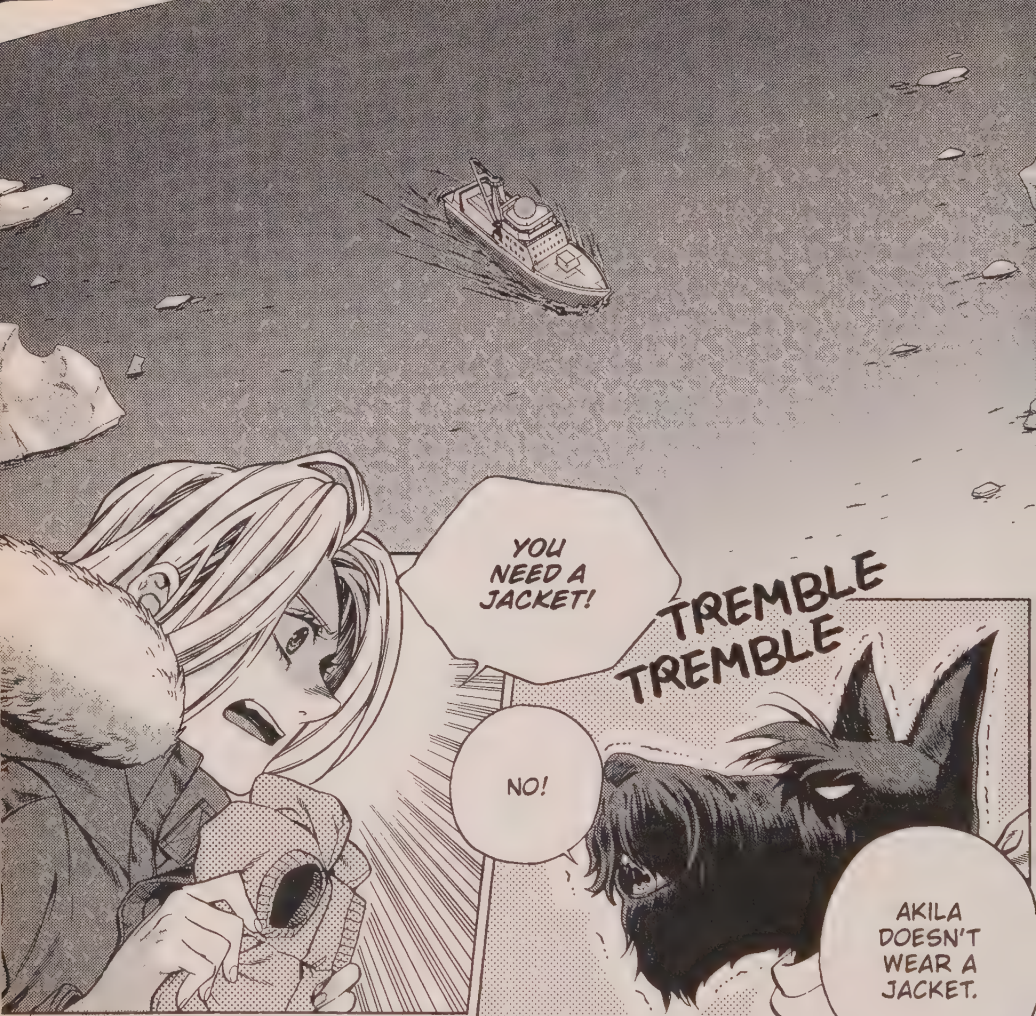
HMM...

WHAT THE
HEY. WE
HAVE FOOD
AND BEDS.

ALL
RIGHT.

LET'S
STAY FOR
A WHILE.





YOU
NEED A
JACKET!

TREMBLE
TREMBLE

NO!

AKILA
DOESN'T
WEAR A
JACKET.

I'M
GONNA
ACT LIKE
A DOG!

DASH!

I CAN'T GET
USED TO
A TALKING
DOG.

SKRT
SKRT

WHAT
ARE YOU
WRITING?

WE
DOCU-
MENT...

...THE
WEATHER
CONDITIONS
EVERY DAY.

EVERY
DAY?!

MAX!!

THEIR
COMPUTERS
ARE SO
COOL!

SCALPING
BRIAN AND
BRIGID AT
POKER.

WHAT
ABOUT
ANGEL?

SHE'S
AHEAD BY
ABOUT
THIRTY
BUCKS.

OH
MY...

SHE IS?

A six-
year-old
playing
poker...?

AIEEE!

THEY CAN SHOW YOU WHAT
THE EARTH WILL LOOK LIKE
IN FIFTY YEARS, OR WHAT
WOULD HAPPEN IF THERE'S
AN EARTHQUAKE.

AIEEE!

Ack!

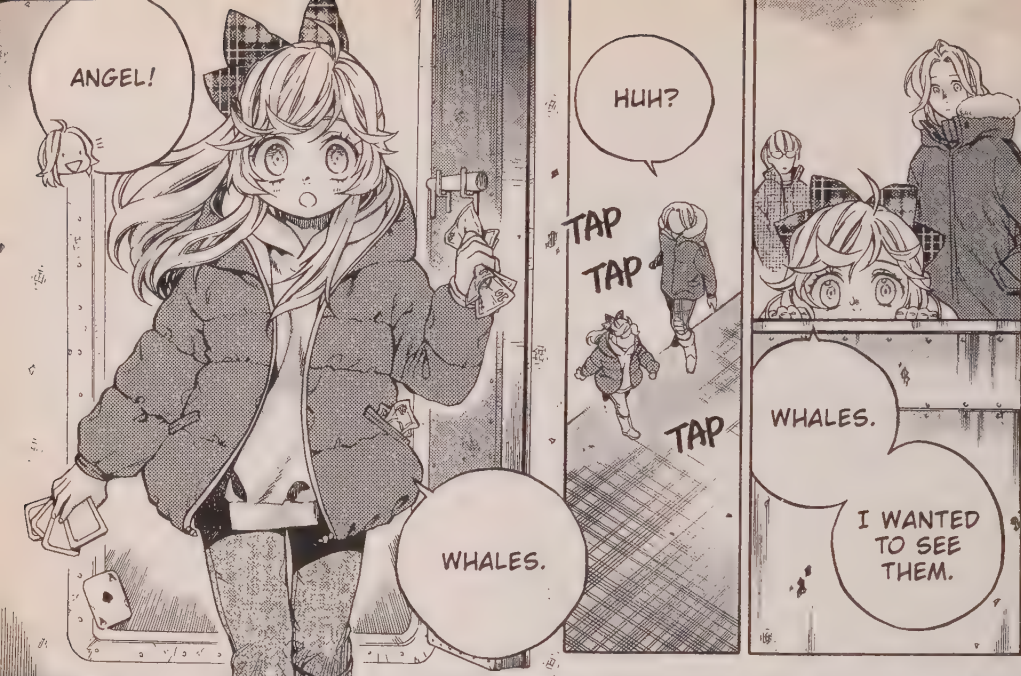
THUD

GAZZY JUST RAN A
DEMONSTRATION
OF WHAT WOULD
HAPPEN IF A TSUNAMI
HIT LOS ANGELES!

COOL.

WHAT'RE
FANG AND
IGGY
DOING?

SSK...



ANGEL!

HUH?

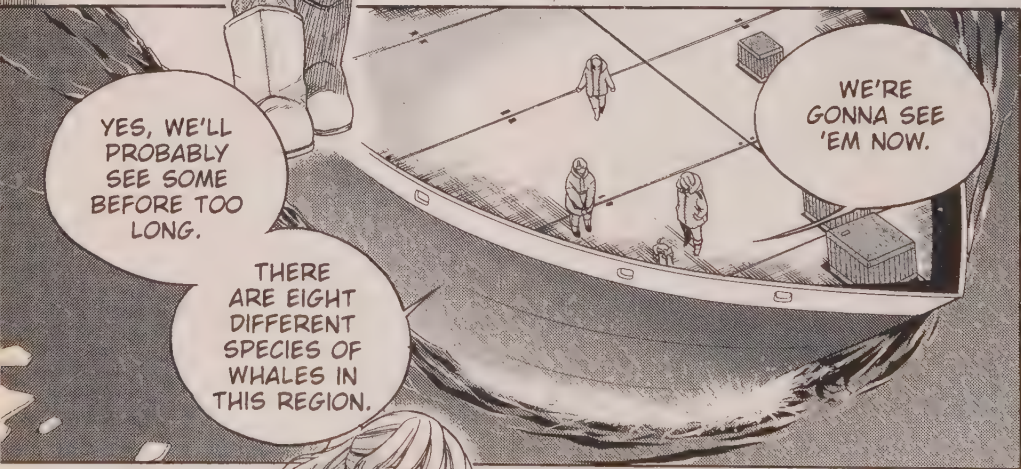
TAP
TAP

TAP

WHALES.

WHALES.

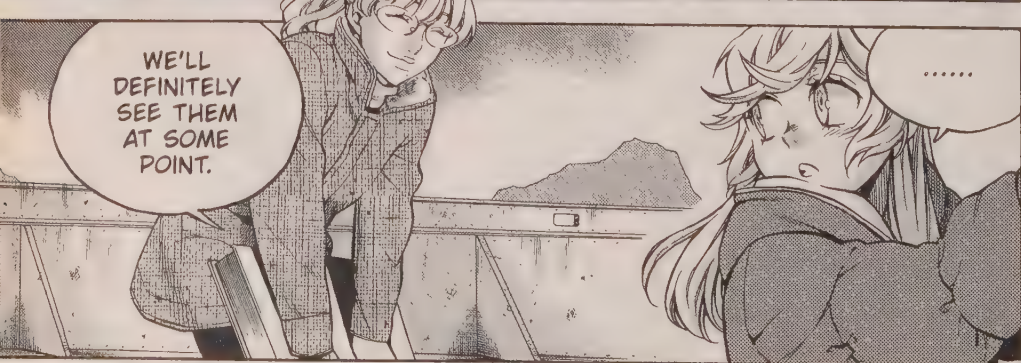
I WANTED
TO SEE
THEM.



YES, WE'LL
PROBABLY
SEE SOME
BEFORE TOO
LONG.

WE'RE
GONNA SEE
'EM NOW.

THERE
ARE EIGHT
DIFFERENT
SPECIES OF
WHALES IN
THIS REGION.



WE'LL
DEFINITELY
SEE THEM
AT SOME
POINT.

.....

NO.

THEY'RE
HERE.

THEY'RE
CURIOUS.

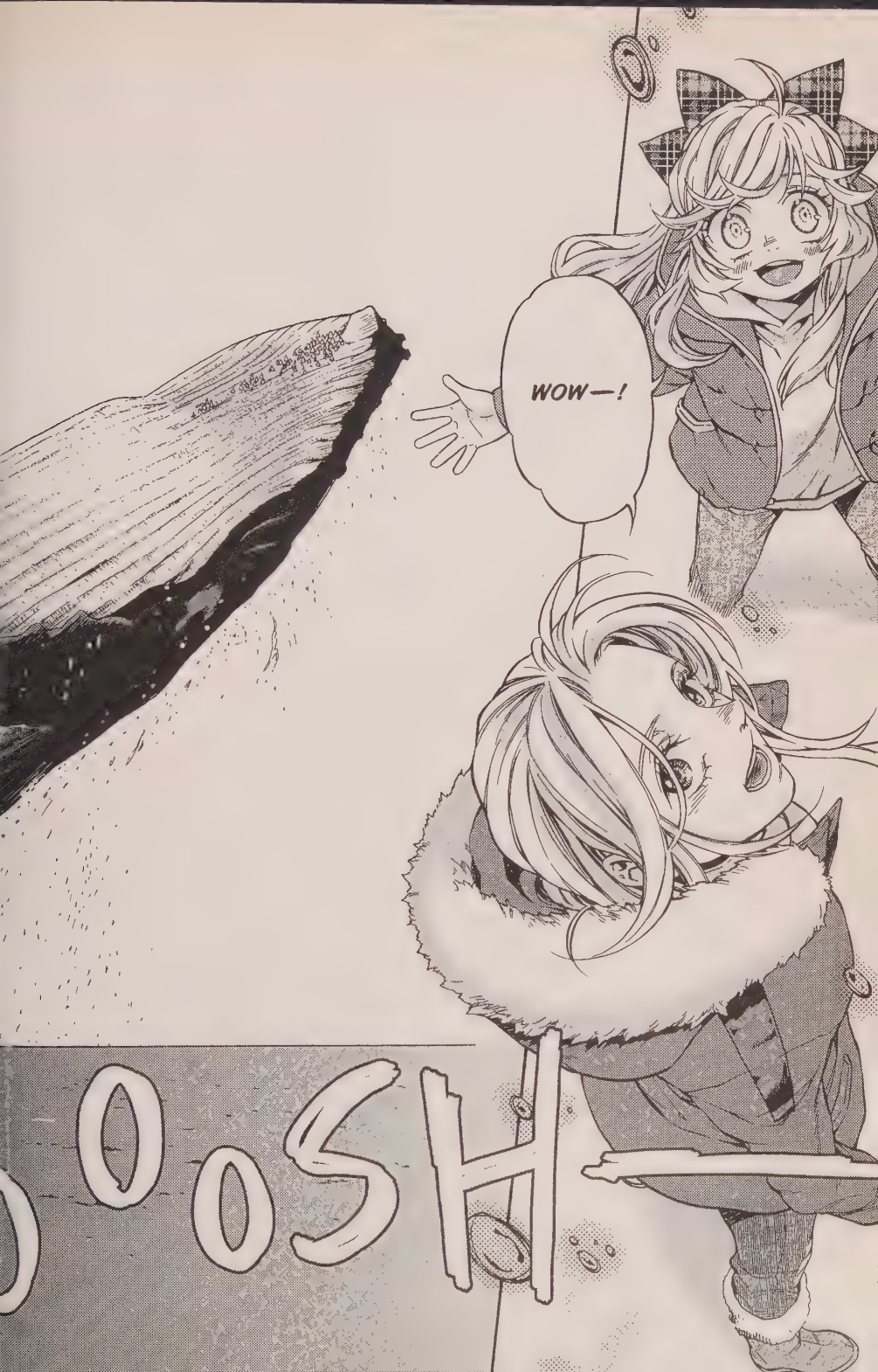
THEY THINK
THIS BOAT
SMELLS
YUCKY.

WHAT?

AH!

PHOOO.





WOW—!

OOSH



I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW HUGE THEY ARE.

HOW MANY OF THEM ARE THERE?

CAN'T TELL. THEY'RE ALL THINKING AT ONCE.

MAYBE TWENTY-FIVE?

THERE ARE BABIES.

THEY WANT TO COME CLOSER, BUT THEIR MOMS ARE SAYING NO.

THEIR MOMS KNOW THE BOAT IS UNNATURAL AND SHOULDN'T BE HERE...

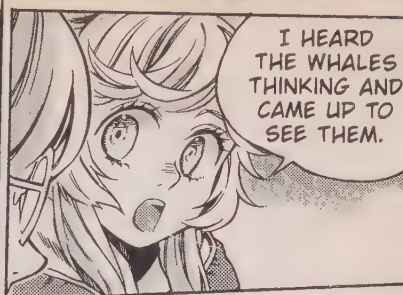
...BUT THEY'RE MOSTLY CURIOUS...

...NOT MAD OR ANYTHING...



DO YOU LIKE
MAKING UP
STORIES
ABOUT
THINGS YOU
SEE?

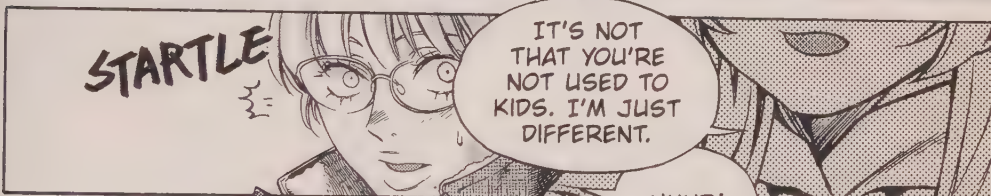
I'M NOT
MAKING
THINGS
UP.



I HEARD
THE WHALES
THINKING AND
CAME UP TO
SEE THEM.



I'M
SO NOT
USED TO
KIDS...



STARTLE

IT'S NOT
THAT YOU'RE
NOT USED TO
KIDS. I'M JUST
DIFFERENT.

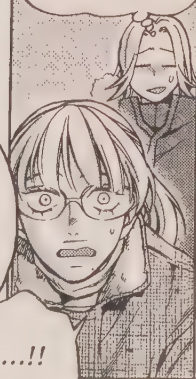
HUH?!

MY FILE
SHOULD
HAVE TOLD
YOU.



NO MORE
POKER FOR
YOU, ANGEL.

I CAN
HEAR WHAT
PEOPLE ARE
THINKING.
ANIMALS
TOO.



...!!

IT
WAS HARD
HAVING TO
STAY ON THE
WENDY K...

...TAKING
THREE DAYS
TO GET FROM
ARGENTINA TO
ANTARCTICA,
WHEN WE
COULD HAVE
FLOWN IT IN
ABOUT FIVE
HOURS.

TOTAL BROKE
DOWN AND
CONSENTED
TO WEAR A
SMALL DOWN
DOG COAT
THAT AKILA
HAD WORN AS
A PUPPY.

THE AIR WAS
COLD, BUT
NO COLDER
THAN IT IS AT
25,000 FEET.

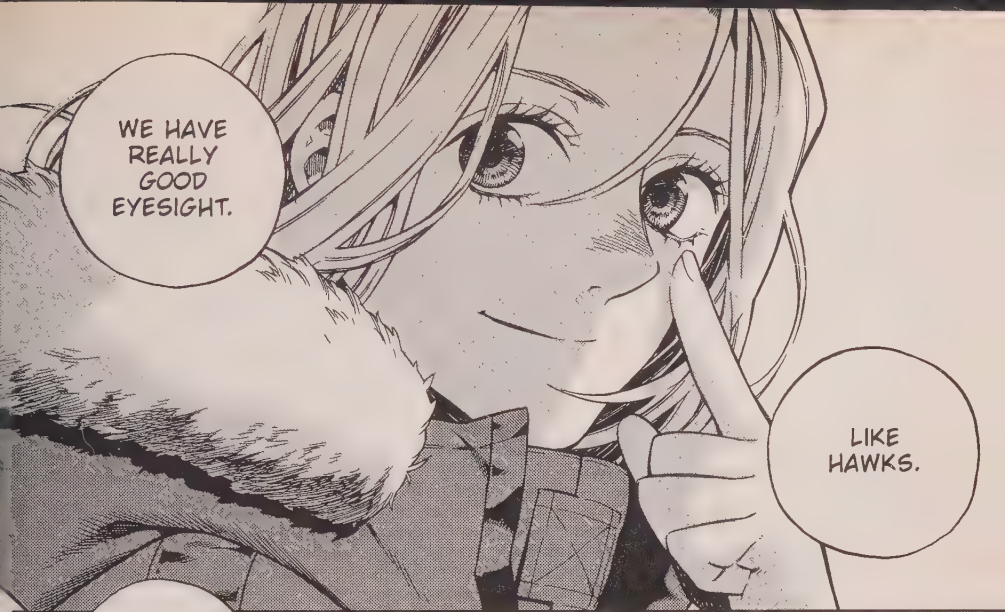
LAND
AHOY!

LAND!

LAND!

IT SHOULD
BE VISIBLE
PRETTY
SOON.

IT'S
VISIBLE
NOW.



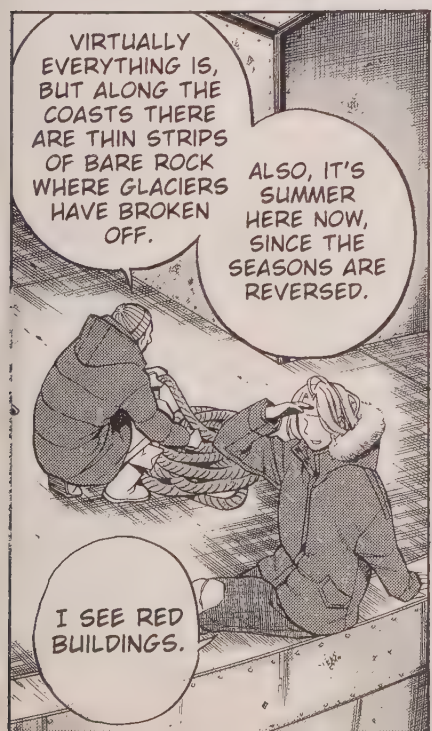
WE HAVE
REALLY
GOOD
EYESIGHT.

LIKE
HAWKS.



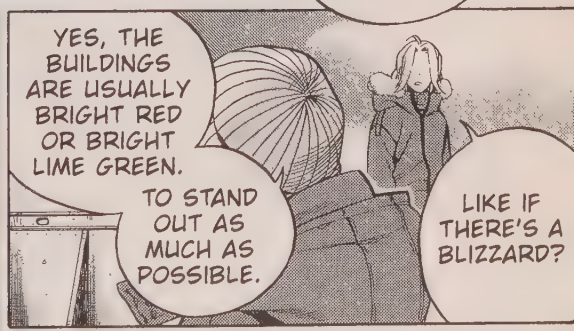
I SEE
GRAY, LIKE
ROCKS.

I THOUGHT
EVERYTHING
WAS COVERED
IN SNOW.



VIRTUALLY
EVERYTHING IS,
BUT ALONG THE
COASTS THERE
ARE THIN STRIPS
OF BARE ROCK
WHERE GLACIERS
HAVE BROKEN
OFF.

ALSO, IT'S
SUMMER
HERE NOW,
SINCE THE
SEASONS ARE
REVERSED.

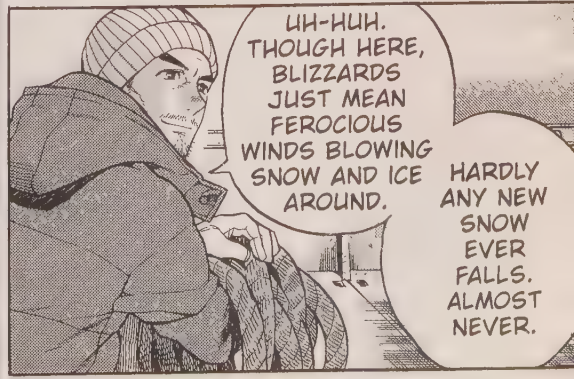


YES, THE
BUILDINGS
ARE USUALLY
BRIGHT RED
OR BRIGHT
LIME GREEN.

TO STAND
OUT AS
MUCH AS
POSSIBLE.

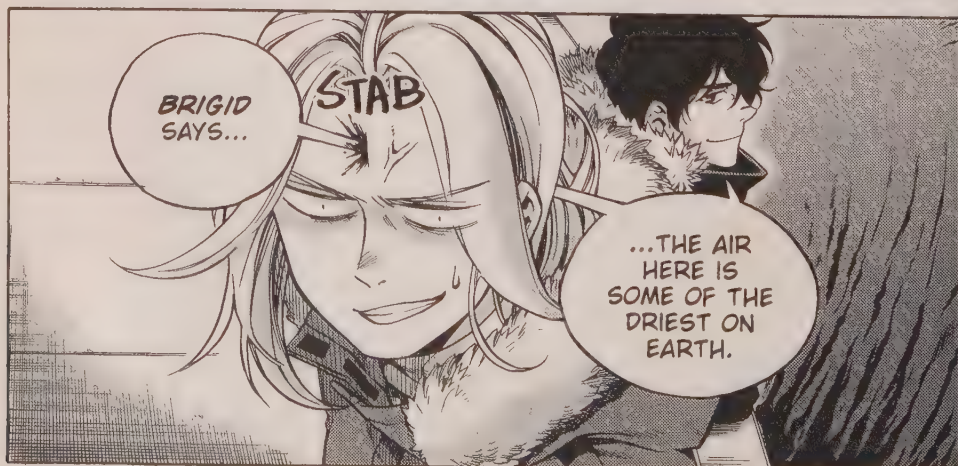
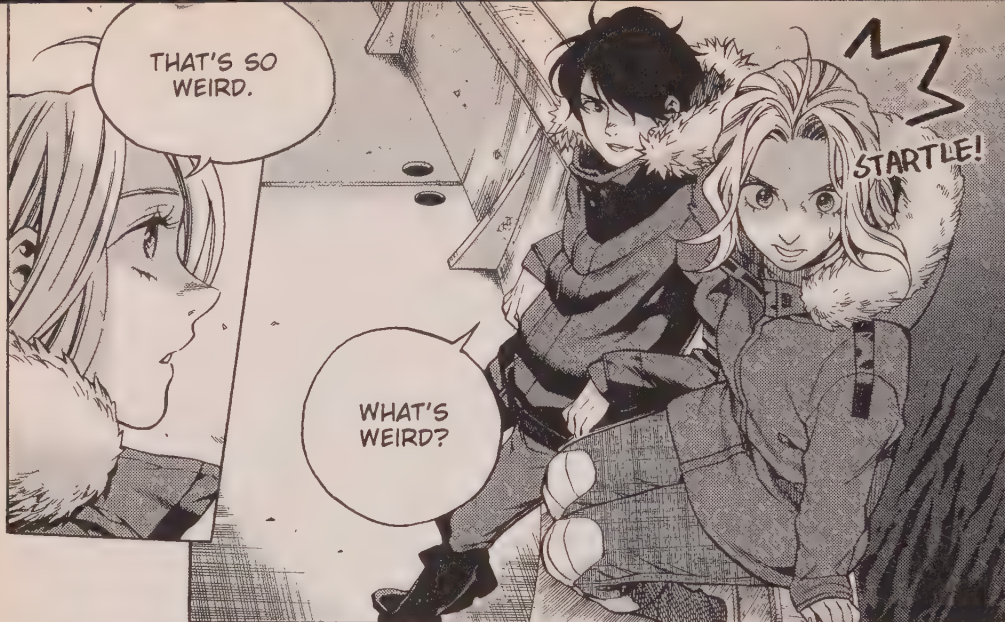
LIKE IF
THERE'S A
BLIZZARD?

I SEE RED
BUILDINGS.



UH-HUH.
THOUGH HERE,
BLIZZARDS
JUST MEAN
FEROCIOUS
WINDS BLOWING
SNOW AND ICE
AROUND.

HARDLY
ANY NEW
SNOW
EVER
FALLS.
ALMOST
NEVER.





BRIGID
THIS,
BRIGID
THAT...!!

Ke-ke.

I GUESS
YOU'LL BE
GLAD TO
GET OFF
THE BOAT.

WE'LL BE
STAYING IN
THE GUEST
QUARTERS
AT THE
LUCIR
STATION.

I DIDN'T
REALIZE
WE'D BE
AROUND A
BUNCH OF
OTHER
PEOPLE.

THEY GET
TOURISTS
THERE
EVERY
YEAR.

THERE ARE
TWELVE
PERMANENT
FAMILIES WHO
LIVE AND
WORK
HERE.

ABOUT
FORTY
PEOPLE IN
ALL.



.....

TIME TO BE
BACK ON
GUARD.

SHAA—



THIS IS LIKE
BEING ON
THE MOON!

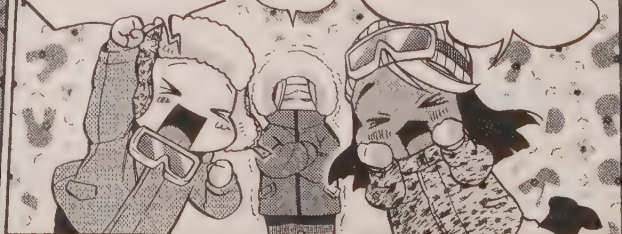


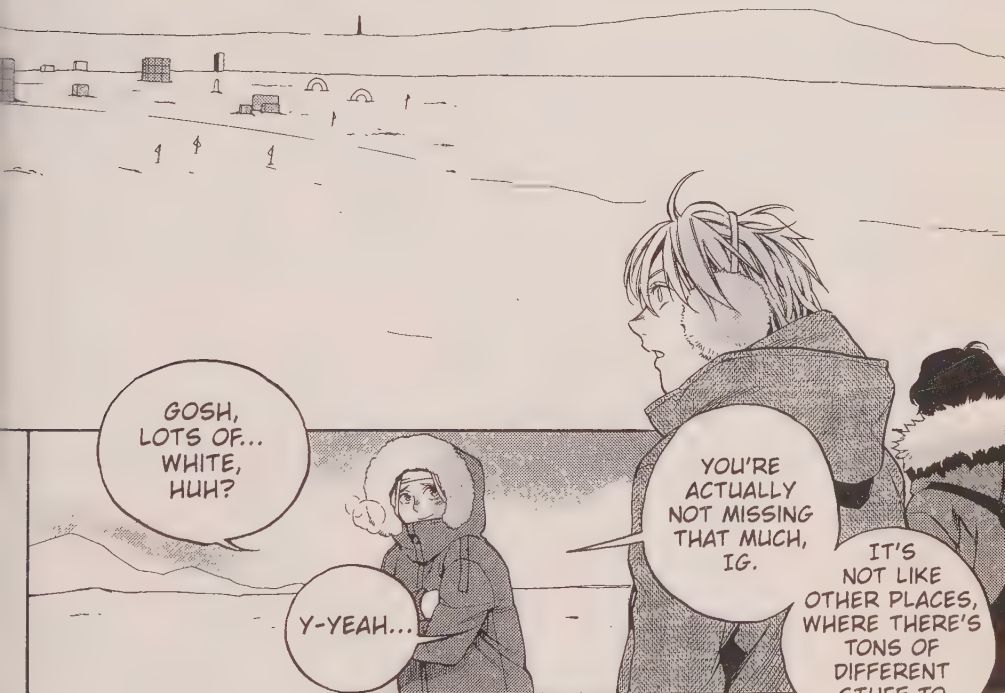
IT'S SO
CLEAN.

COLD, COLD,
COLD, COLD,
COLD, COLD.

WE'RE
EXPLORERS!

WE MIGHT SEE
STUFF NO ONE
ELSE HAS
EVER SEEN.





GOSH,
LOTS OF...
WHITE,
HUH?

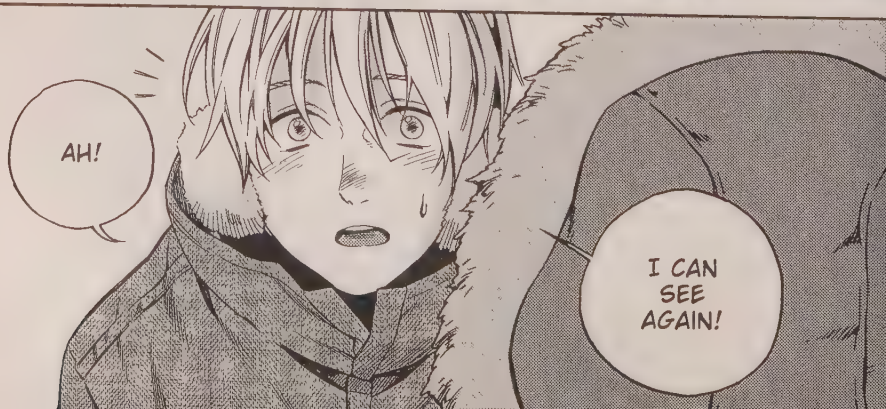
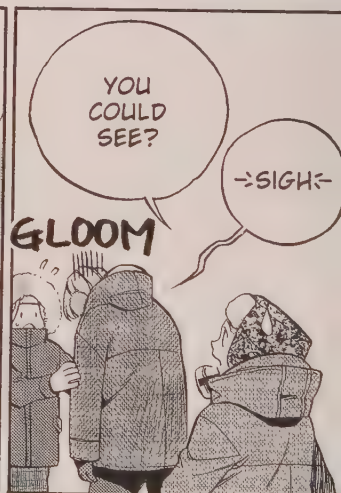
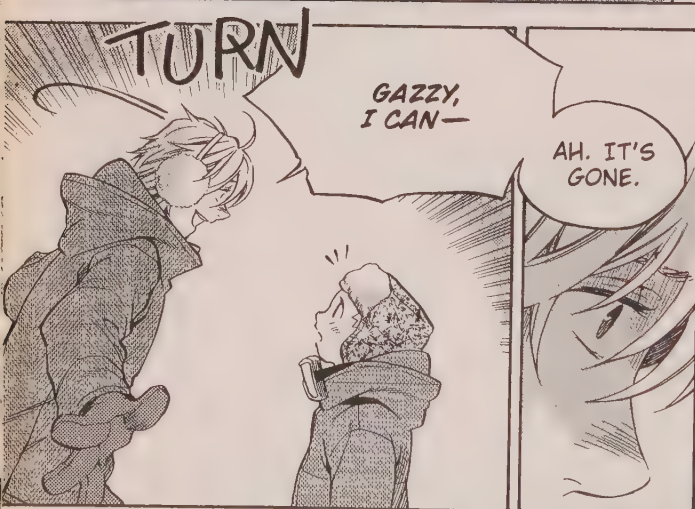
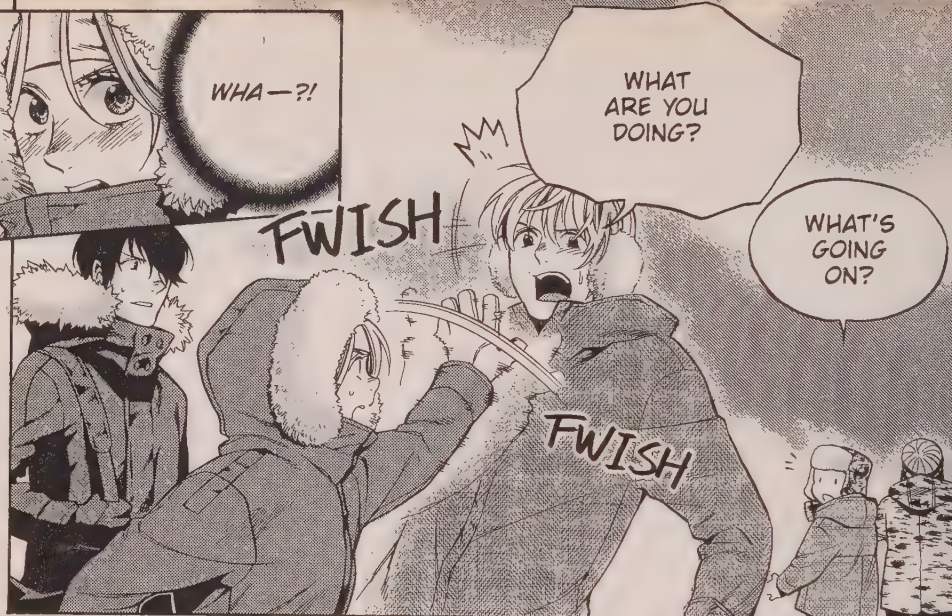
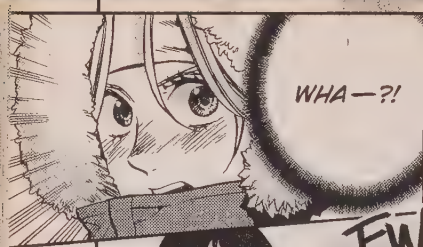
YOU'RE
ACTUALLY
NOT MISSING
THAT MUCH,
IG.

IT'S
NOT LIKE
OTHER PLACES,
WHERE THERE'S
TONS OF
DIFFERENT
STUFF TO
SEE.

Y-YEAH...

I KNOW...

I CAN
SEE IT.





I SEE
THE WHITE
MOUNTAINS
AGAIN!

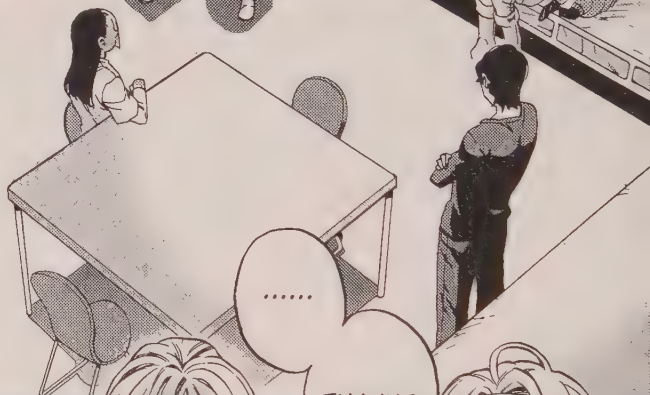


.....



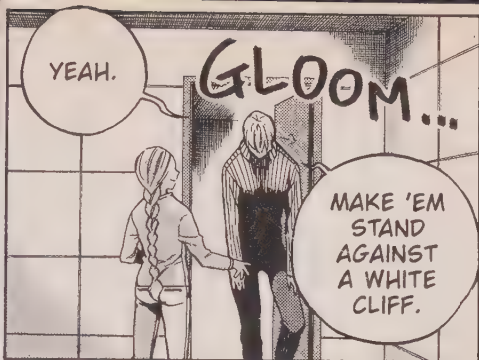
.....

I CAN
SEE!





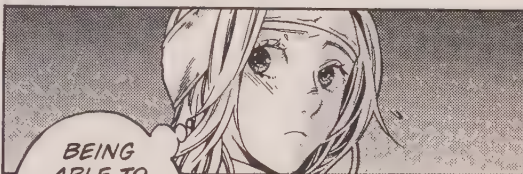
YOU GUYS
WANT TO
SEE SOME
PENGUINS?



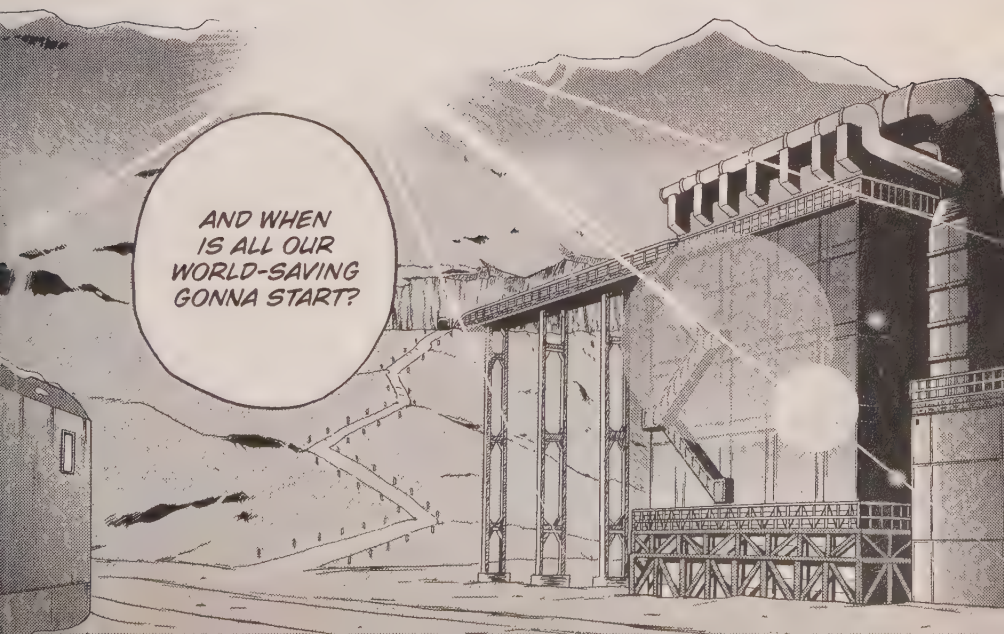
YEAH.

GLOOM...

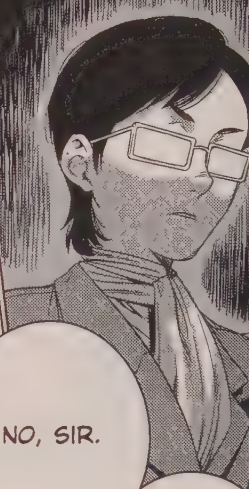
MAKE 'EM
STAND
AGAINST
A WHITE
CLIFF.



BEING
ABLE TO
SEE WHITE...
IS THAT HIS
NEW SKILL?



AND WHEN
IS ALL OUR
WORLD-SAVING
GONNA START?



THE
MUTANTS
HAVE
ARRIVED
AT THE STATION,
SIR, AS
EXPECTED.

NO, SIR.

ALL
SIX ARE
ACCOUNTED
FOR.

KH-SHEE

THEY'RE
ALL
TOGETHER?
NONE OF
THEM
STAYED ON
THE BOAT?

VERY
GOOD.

KH-SHEE

SEND A
MESSAGE
TO OUR
CONTACT...

...SAYING THAT
THE SCHEDULE
WILL CONTINUE
AS PLANNED.

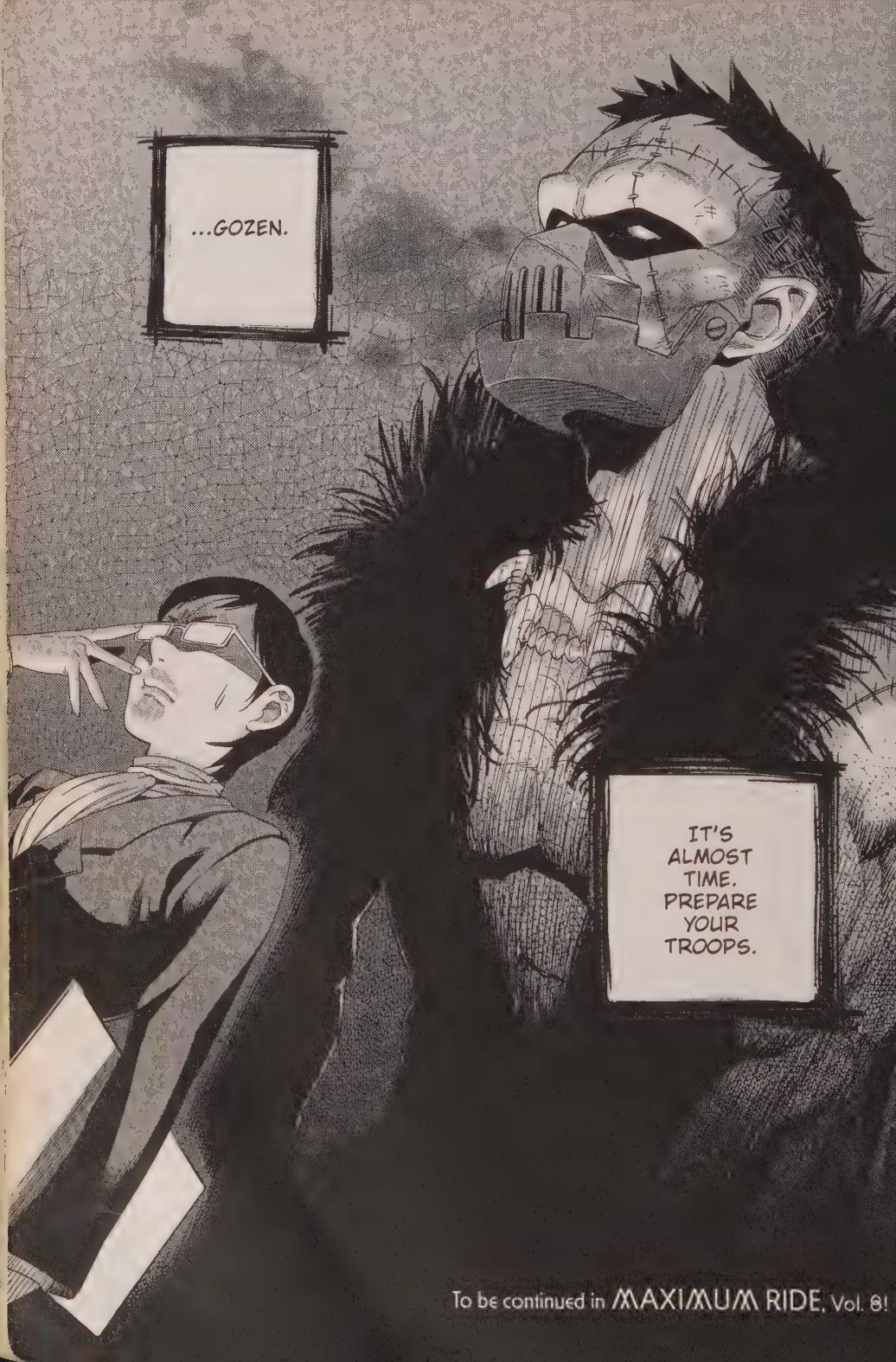
YES,
SIR.

THUD...

->GULP<-

THUD...

AH, AH,
GOOD
TIMING...



...GOZEN.

IT'S
ALMOST
TIME.
PREPARE
YOUR
TROOPS.

MAXIMUM
RIDE

A black and white close-up photograph of a cat's face. The cat has dark fur around its eyes and on its ears, with lighter fur on its muzzle and forehead. It is looking slightly to the right. The image is framed by a thin black border.

A small cartoon character with black hair in pigtails, wearing large white-rimmed glasses and a grey shirt with a large 'N' on it. It has a small 'T' on its forehead and is holding its hands up near its face.

TODAY'S HEROINE, MILK,
IS VERY SWEET...

...REALLY
LIKES
PEOPLE...

...AND IS A BIT
ECCENTRIC.



ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M WORKING
PAST MIDNIGHT, SHE'S LIKE A
WEREWOLF UNDER A FULL MOON.

ANYWAY, MILK REALLY, REALLY LIKES ME. EVEN WHEN I'M AWAY FOR A MINUTE TO GO TO THE WASHROOM, APPARENTLY SHE CRIES AND CRIES.

MEOW!!

SHE CALMS DOWN AS SOON AS I GET BACK, SO I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN THIS. ONLY THE WITNESSES TESTIFY.

MEOW!!

MEOW!!

MEOW!!

SHUT UP!!

SHE LOVES ME BEST
OUT OF ANYONE IN THE
STUDIO, SO MUCH SO
THAT SHE'S ALMOST
LIKE A DOG.

I THINK SHE THINKS OF ME AS HER MOM,
SINCE I'M THE ONE WHO BROUGHT HER HERE.

THEN CAME THIS YEAR...
I HAD TO MOVE AND
COULDN'T MAKE IT TO THE
STUDIO FOR THREE OR FOUR
DAYS. IT WAS THE BUSIEST
I'VE BEEN SINCE I GOT MILK.

AND...MILK, THE CALM AND TROUBLE-FREE CAT, CHANGED!

SHE DOESN'T LOOK
SO GOOD WITHOUT
NARAE AROUND...

DAZED...

AFTER I FINALLY
RETURNED TO THE
STUDIO, I WENT
OUT FOR FOOD WITH
EVERYONE. WHEN
I CAME BACK...
THIS IS WHAT HAD
HAPPENED!

<CHAPTER 40, PAGE 17>

THE FUNNY THING IS...SHE TORE
UP THE PAGES PRETTY BADLY,
BUT SHE ONLY DAMAGED THE
AREAS THAT WERE BLANK
BECAUSE I'D INTENDED TO
DRAW THOSE PARTS DIGITALLY.

T.T

IT'S A SECRET FROM MY EDITOR,
JUYOUN, THAT I THOUGHT AT
THE TIME IT WAS A PITY MILK
HADN'T TORN UP THE WHOLE
PAGE, SINCE I COULD HAVE USED
IT AS AN EXCUSE TO EXTEND
MY DEADLINE. LOL

GAH!!

THIS ONE TIME, I REFUSED TO SLEEP
WITH HER BECAUSE I WAS TOO SICK, AND
SHE THREW A TANTRUM AND SPILLED
INK ALL OVER...BUT EVEN THEN!!

ALL THE ART
WAS SAFE.

EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T REALLY TALK
TO MILK, I THINK SHE KNOWS THAT
I TREASURE MY ART PAGES. (THERE
ARE OTHER OPINIONS THAT SHE JUST
DOESN'T LIKE THE TASTE OF INK. LOL)

AND THEN AGAIN IN FEBRUARY!
WE CELEBRATED THE LUNAR NEW
YEAR IN KOREA, SO I WAS GONE
FOR A WHILE. AND WHEN I GOT
BACK, MILK HAD DONE IT AGAIN.
BUT MYSTERIOUSLY, SHE DOESN'T
DAMAGE THE DRAWINGS.

MAYBE BECAUSE SHE
CAN'T TALK TO ME,
SHE'S TRYING TO TRAIN
ME BY HOLDING MY
PAGES HOSTAGE.
(OR JUST TO ANNOY ME?!)

I'M AN ARTIST'S
CAT. SHOULDN'T I
DO THIS MUCH?

I'VE STARTED
TWEETING. @2NARE.
OF COURSE, MOST OF
MY TWEETS ARE NOT
IN ENGLISH.

GIRLFRIEND
WANTED.

SEE YOU AGAIN!

MAXIMUM RIDE: THE MANGA

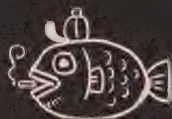
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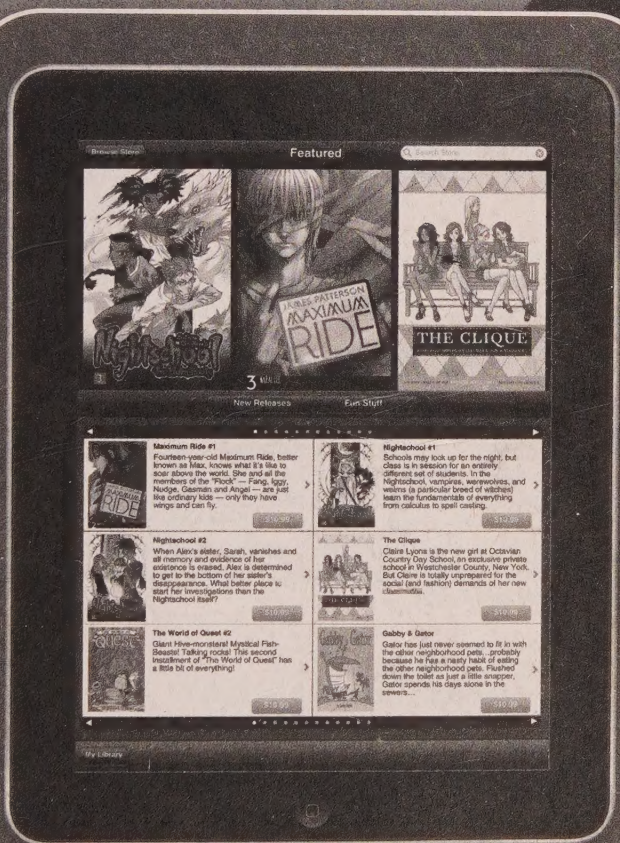
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**Yen Press
Hachette Book Group
237 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10017**

**HachetteBookGroup.com
YenPress.com**

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First Yen Press Edition: October 2013

ISBN: 978-0-7595-2973-1

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Printed in the United States of America





3 3028 00961 1452

HARRIS

FANG'S BLOG HAS BROUGHT ITEX TO THE WORLD'S ATTENTION, AND HIS READERS ALL OVER THE WORLD TAKE A STAND, SHUTTING DOWN THE EVIL ORGANIZATION. BUT MAX ISN'T THROUGH SAVING THE WORLD YET – THIS TIME IN ANTARCTICA!!

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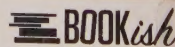
CAN \$14.00

ISBN 978-0-7595-2973-1



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